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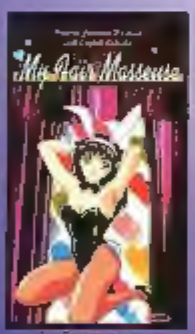

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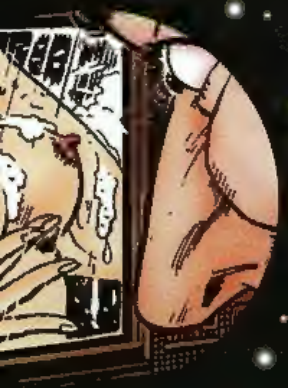

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HEAVY METAL

Howdy all! Hope your holidays were killer, and you got everything you wanted for Christmas.

This issue is our second time "at bat" for 1999, and its smokin'! So listen up because I ain't kidding!!

After scores of letters and e-mails requesting another installment of Storm – your wish is granted! This episode by Lawrence and Lodewijk is one of my favorites in the series, I hope you like it too!!

Simon "The Great One" Bisley, not only delivers the groceries with the second Simon Coldwater trip, but provides a kick ass cover, with our above mentioned hero (?)... Heh...

Corben, Caza, and Manara grace our pages once again with some amazing shorts, Flopi's back with two hilarious quickies, and we round out the big barrel of fun with G-Squad, The Pill, and Heroes!

But wait, there's more – Dave Leri showcases his stunning talents in the Gallery section, and our "groovy staples", Galactic Geographic and Dossier are up to their usual top shelf entertainment. Damn, this whole package is more fun than anyone could have in an hour! Wait, smart...

Hey, here's a thought – if for any reason you still haven't had your full Heavy Metal fix, drift on over to your computer and visit the heavy-metal.net website! Your going to love the latest additions to nearly all the various areas, especially the F.A.K.K.2 section! There's over 100 new images, and half of them have never been seen before!

Cool for sure, but it's only the beginning – as on the first of each month we'll be piling on 30 new exclusive pics of the F.A.K.K.2 project! Scenes, sets, backgrounds, all the behind the scenes stuff we all love to see.

So, keep those letters and e-mails coming – we love to hear what's on your mind!

Till next time!

Kevin Eastman

Website:
www.Heavy-metal.net

DIALOGUE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear H.M.,
I am trying to find the clips, cast and production on the F.A.K.K.2 page of your website. Where's the goods? I'm dying to see what this movie is all about... Please post the clips and all the other stuff. Thanks a million

Zach

Dear Zach,
We're on it bro – adding to our website as fast as we can, so stay tuned! As of November 1st we posted sixty Simon Bisley "conceptual" paintings. On December 1st we posted 50 images of Julie Strain as F.A.K.K.2 and on the first of each month from there on out, we'll be adding 30 new images right from the film! Characters, sets, backgrounds, studio tours, cast, crew... you name it, we'll have it exclusively for you!

Dear H.M.,
I've been reading your magazine for about four years now. During these years a lot has changed. I've graduated high school, joined the military, got married, watched my son's birth and moved a lot. However, one thing was constant. I could always look forward to Heavy Metal Magazine. The art has always been excellent and the stories superb. I thank all of you who put this together. Keep it coming!

Alex

Dear Alex,
Thanks for your kind words. We work very hard to bring the best possible work to each issue, and we appreciate your comments! Congratulations on a busy four years and we wish you continued good fortune!

Dear H.M.,
I've been a fan of the magazine for fifteen years. While I still love it, I am saddened to see the quality of the edition slowly going downhill. From the paper stock, to the selection of the stories, to the shameless Eastman products being showcased and advertised. Heavy Metal gets less "cutting edge" and more mainstream. The more you distance the magazine from the European publishing style after which it was conceived and modeled, the more it loses its mystique and appeal. U.S. publishing style is fine for selling, but fantasy, science fiction and sequential art belong to a different conception. I hope you give it some thought, you don't have to be a garish magazine to keep competing in today's world. Thanks for listening.

John

Dear John,
Thanks for your comments – it's important to get "both sides of the coin" so we can constantly improve! I'll try to respond without justifying our actions, but it'll be hard... First, yes we have changed our paper stock to try and keep our cover price down, while keeping quality as high as possible. Second, yes I do plug a lot of H.M. related products that we produce – but over all it's a fraction of the H.M. style products we sell, produced by outside companies, much like music magazines promote and sell products related to that industry – doesn't it make sense that readers of H.M. would like to know of and have a chance to buy other "like" items? Finally, I find your comment of "distancing ourselves from European style" interesting – only because 99% of each issue features European artists and writers. We try to select the best work produced "over there" with as much variety as possible, while keeping the sci-fi edge. At the same time, the work and interests of foreign artists and consumers has evolved – so as their tastes change, ours change with them. This year we're adding a ninth issue to our publishing program, and we'll start a members only web section to showcase a few more graphic novels on our internet site to show even more edgier stuff – check them out if you can, and drop me a note in another six months to let us know how we're doing. Looking forward to more of your thoughts!

Any questions or comments you may have, please send to:
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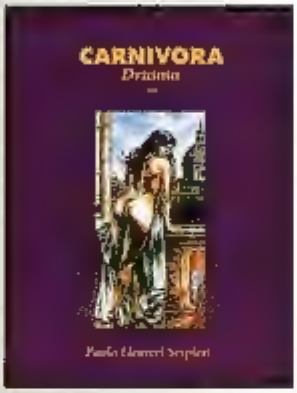

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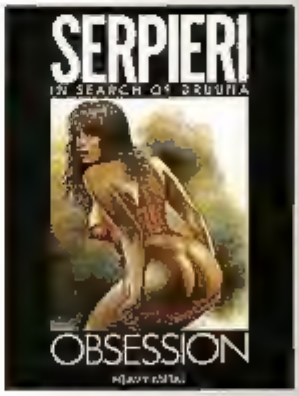

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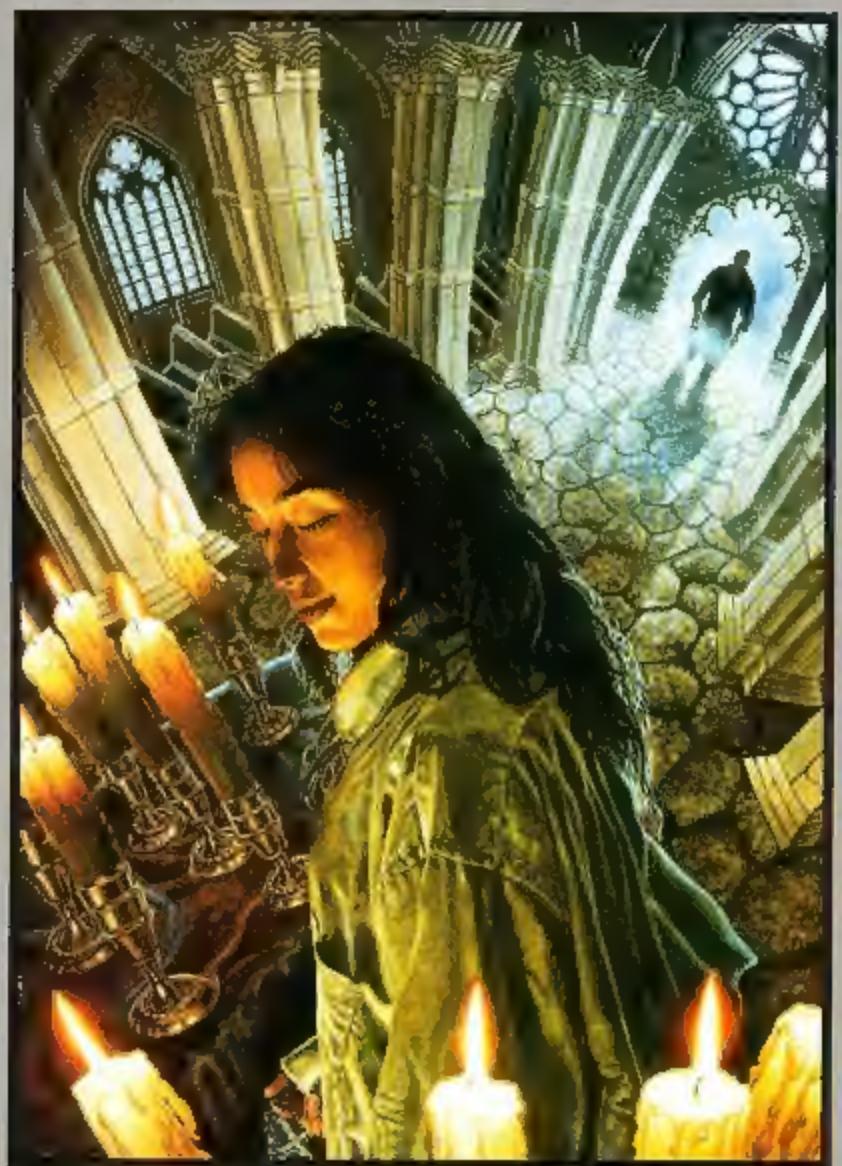
GALLERY

DAVID LERI

Originally from Erie, Pennsylvania, David now lives with his wife Lora in Columbus OH where he has been working as a freelance illustrator for the past two years. He attended the Columbus College of Art and Design, majoring in illustration with a focus on dimensional illustration. Leri was fortunate to have some pretty cool part time jobs which put food on the table while he was approaching new clients and making the transition to freelancing full time. One of these jobs involved sculpting creatures cast in foam-latex, fabricating props and torture devices, etc. for the production company, PromoWest Production's Scarefactory.



Although relatively new to the field, Leri has been very busy working on many projects in the role playing and collectible card game industries. He's had the opportunity to work for many different clients including: AEG, Five Rings Publishing, Pinnacle Entertainment Group, Inquest Magazine, White Wolf Publishing, On-line Entertainment, Last Unicorn Games and Ronin Publishing.

About a year ago David self-published two limited edition prints, "The Mission" and "Little Slice of Hell". He is currently finishing up sculpting two resin kits, which with a little luck will hopefully be molded and ready to go this summer. Leri really enjoys mixing it up between color, black and white, and dimensional assignments, which he believes is helpful to him in avoiding burnout periods.

In terms of the future, Leri is fairly content with how things are right now. After a frustrating start with a fair share of rejection, he's really pleased to be able to work on such a wide variety of projects and to be able to pick and choose which ones appeal to him. Some day in the future he hopes to be able to put together enough pieces to be published in an artist's collection like so many of his favorite artists.

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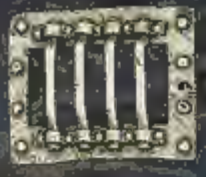

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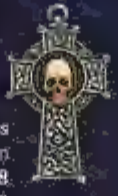

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Taylor Clark Presents Inteleg International

Inteleg International is one of the largest wholesalers of Anime and Japanese import products. Among their many projects are the "Crow" cold cast porcelain, "Aries" cold cast porcelain and the "Spawn" vinyl kit. In business for over five years, Inteleg International is embarking on one of their most exciting projects yet-- producing a line of six statues by world renowned artist, Luis Royo

How did Inteleg get involved with Royo? While attending the San Diego Comic Con this past August, sales representative Garner Loudermilk, being the big Royo fan that he was, went over to visit Royo at his booth as often as he possibly could Loudermilk began talking with Royo's representatives and then convinced his boss that it would be a great honor to undertake such a project. So, Garner was put in charge of the project, and lo and behold, here we are

The first of the statues is based on Royo's "Nine Tongues and One Tear" The statue stands over 13 inches tall and comes with an optional removable backdrop. "Nine Tongues and One Tear" will have a limited casting run of only 3,500 statues. Also included is a certificate of authenticity as well as the chance to get a limited edition, hand autographed card of the original painting, "Nine Tongues and One Tear" by Luis Royo. All of this will be available for $129 95 The tentative release date for this statue is April.

The Royo statue is being produced by sculptor Sam Greenwell Greenewell has been sculpting professionally for four years His ability to capture the female form was apparent early on, and led to a great many projects. Some of these noteworthy projects have included Astro City action figures for Toy Vault, the Gen13 action figure line for Polydata, as well as numerous licensed pieces for the Bradford Exchange. He is also the designer and sculptor of the Aries statue produced by Inteleg as well as the founder of Acornboy Studios, his own production company which specializes in cold-cast statues, resin kits and comic books.

As for the other statues, the candidates include "*Kiss of the Fog*", "*The Never-Ending Sparkle*" "*Steel for Leonardo's Dream*", "*Black Flights*" and several other popular Royo pieces. Fans can go to Inteleg's website at http: /www inteleg.com and vote for their favorite painting to be made into a statue

If you are interested in ordering this statue, please check out the May 1999 issue for ordering details

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GALACTIC GEOGRAPHIC

Meeting of Civilizations 6

"...field trips [on the WO planet] often got a little scary."

Our exploration of the WO planet is in its sixth week and, after spending much time examining the WO pyramid in space and after its landing, we are finally beginning our exploration of the planet itself.

Our colonists are a specially trained team with a wide range of scientific skills, all of whom have traveled over three hundred light years to be here. They live in WO approved base camps, each providing living space for a dozen Geographic members. Land areas are explored by the Humans and Tsaillerol while the oceans are the aquatic Norons' specialty.

It comes as no surprise that the WO have learned to regulate life on their world. Its surface is dotted with areas that are left wild. The swampy wetlands (shown here in a sketch from a colonist's electronic notebook) are difficult to explore on foot. The land is a spongy bog populated by the WO equivalent of insects, worms and a curious creature called a *"Bubblefly."* Its adult form was a constant problem for our team because their drift-and-snag feeding habits led them inevitably to become entangled in our gear. Not surprisingly, its life cycle has been well documented in countless notebooks (see opposite page).

A curious later stage of the *bubblefly's* life cycle finds it living underground in a sack or 'pupae' while its body changes into an adult. This is not a dormant phase in the creature's life. Its mouth remains above ground, snagging hapless prey (or shredding human colonists' boot soles) as it continues to grow.

The field sketch by colonist Lisa Thompson captures a mood that cameras cannot. That is why colonists are encouraged to enhance their observational skills by taking time to make such sketches. Of her time in the Wo wetlands, Lisa said: "I enjoyed studying the swamps and loved the awesome view of the pyramids on the horizon, but it was a tough place to explore and field trips often got a little scary. The *bubblefly* is the worst. It can get caught in things and as soon as it lands it starts eating."

Other areas of the planet are devoted to ocean, wetlands, forests, agriculture, and industry: each operated and cared for by citizens whose physical nature is complementary to those environs. We will examine them in future issues.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

GALACTIC GEOGRAPHIC ©1998 KARL KOFOED

1
2
3
4
5
The Bubblefly
The first creature identified and studied by Geographic field researchers. Stages of its development in the WO swamps is illustrated above from egg-chain (1), to crab-like predator (2-4), to its underground metamorphosis (5) from which it emerges as a hydrogen filled adult.
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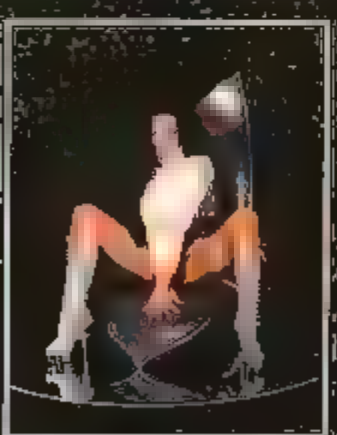

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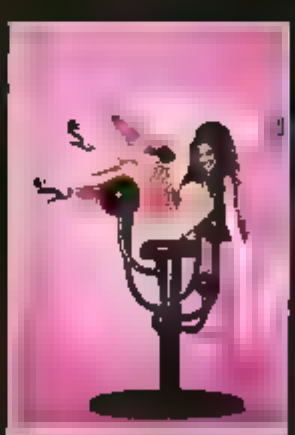

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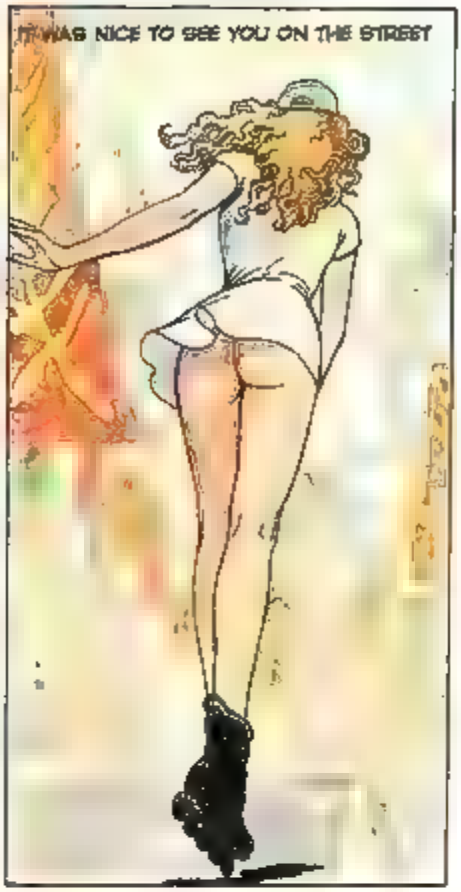
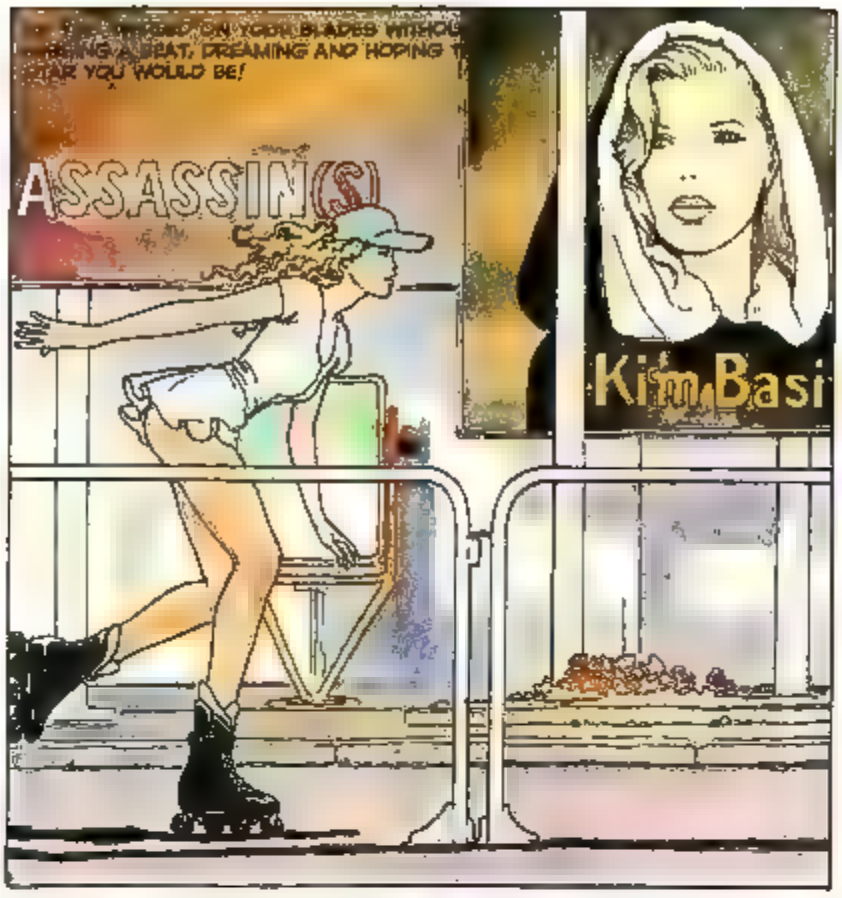
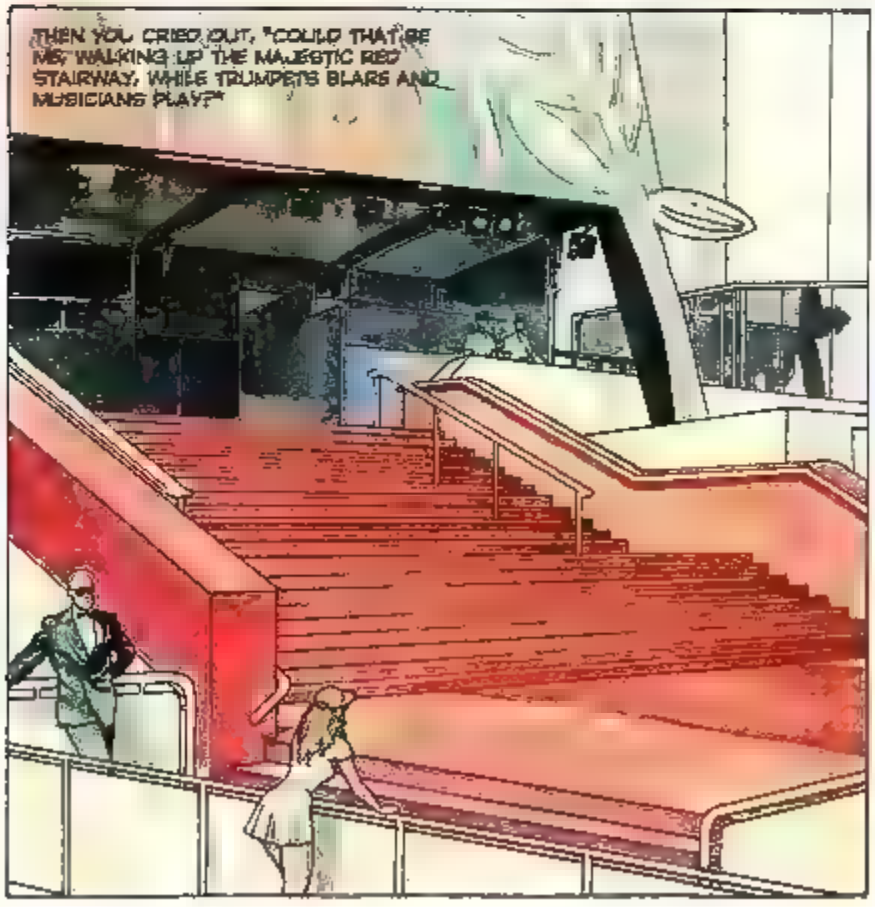
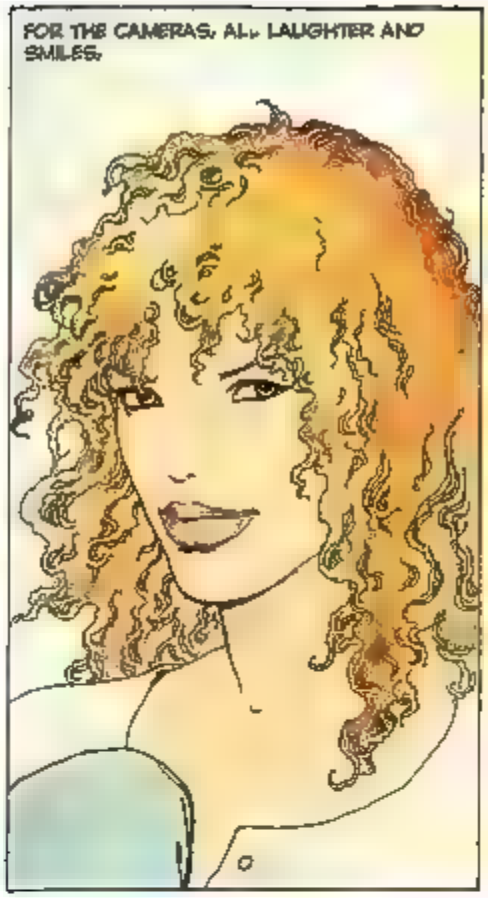

IT WAS NICE TO SEE YOU ON THE STREET


ASSASSIN(S)
Kim Basi


THEN YOU CRIED OUT, "COULD THAT BE ME WALKING UP THE MAJESTIC RED STAIRWAY, WHILE TRUMPETS BLARE AND MUSICIANS PLAY?"

YOUR FUTURE WAS RIGHT THERE, WAITING FOR YOU...
LOOK! PHOTOGRAPHERS AND A TV CREW!

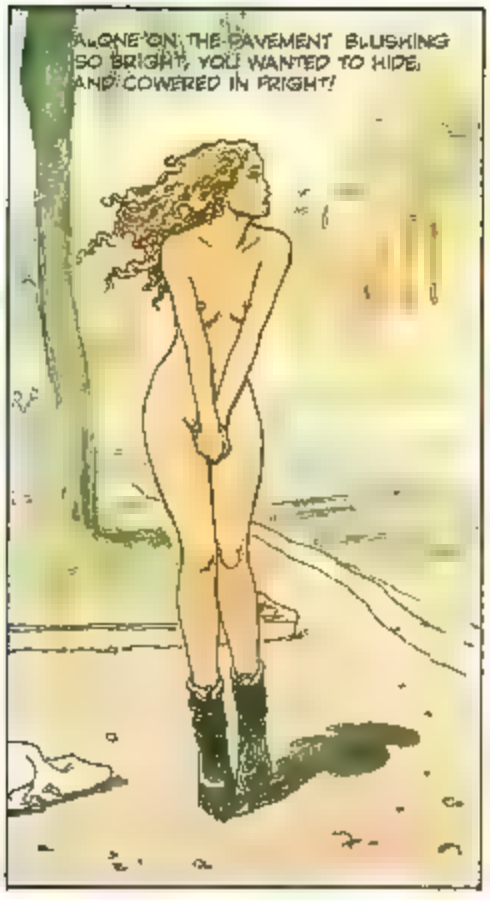
THEY [illegible] HERE FOR THE FILM [illegible]VAL— IT'S TRUE!

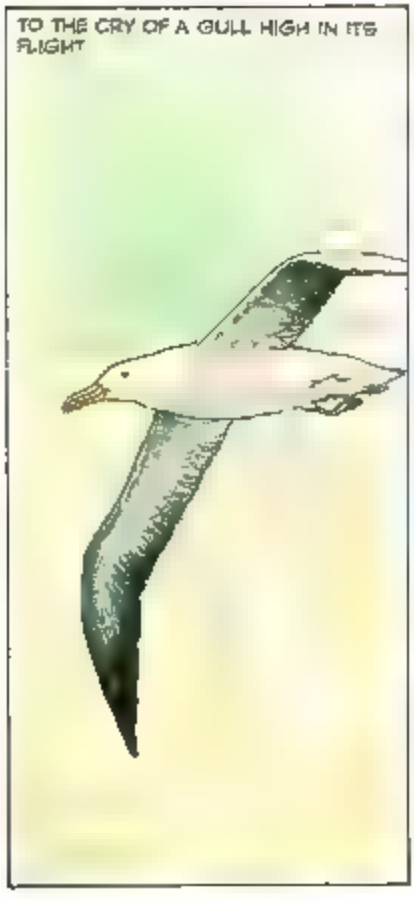

FOR THE CAMERAS, ALL LAUGHTER AND SMILES.

YOU STRIPPED OFF [illegible] DRESS AND POSED FOR AWHILE.

THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, OUR YOUNG WANNABE WAS LEFT ALL ALONE—AND OUT OF HER MOUTH CAME A LOUD MOAN..
IT'S KIM BASINGER!

OFF THEY ALL RAN, AS FAST AS THEY COULD,
FOR SUCH IS THEIR JOB, THEY DO AS THEY SHOU
HURRY UP! IT'S KIM BASINGER! GET A MOVE ON!


ALONE ON THE PAVEMENT BLUSHING SO BRIGHT, YOU WANTED TO HIDE, AND COWERED IN FRIGHT!


TO THE CRY OF A GULL HIGH IN ITS FLIGHT

YOU SAT AGAINST A TREE, YOUR SANDWICH TO BITE

AND THE WIND BLEW ALL THE CRUMBS OUT OF SIGHT
MA
LA
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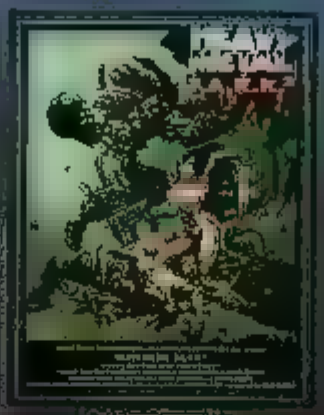

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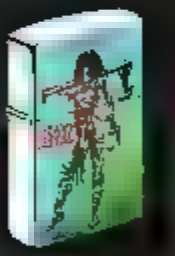

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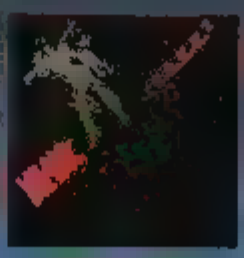

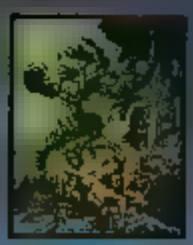

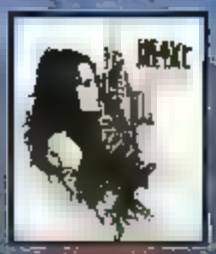

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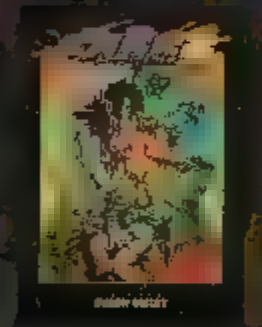

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WE DONT NEED A THIRSTY HERO!
BY THE GODS!
CHUG! CHUG!
WHAT'S UP, GROMBACK? IS YOUR WIFE COMIN' TO GET YOU AND MAKE YOU DO THE DISHES?
HA! HA! HA!
SNORT
NAAH! I DID 'EM THIS MORNIN' IT'S WORSE THAN THAT! "THEY" ARE COMING!
SHIT THEY COULD'VE GONE SOMEWHERE ELSE! THE STREET'S FULL OF BARS
MAYBE BUT THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY HERE!
I NEED A VOLUNTEER!
SO NO VOLUNTEERS? I'LL JUST HAVE TO PICK ONE LET'S SEE
EENY MEENY MINEY MO... PICK A TIGER BY THE TOE YOU'RE
WHY ME? I'M NEW AT THIS! I'LL NEVER
THAT'S THE WAY THE BELLY RUMBLES! AND YOU NEED THE EXPERIENCE
OK! ANY WAY, I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE
GREAT AND THE REST OF YOU CAN WIPE THOSE SILLY GRINS OFF YOUR FACES, PUT DOWN YOUR GODAS AND READY YOUR WEAPONS
GRUMPH! IF I WASN'T SO THIRSTY I WOULD-NT COME HERE I GOT A BAD FEELING 'BOUT THIS PLACE

I CAN NEVER HAVE A NICE QUIET DRINK IT ALWAYS ENDS UP AS A BRAWL"
EXCUSE ME BARTENDER
TWO BEERS AND A DRY MARTINI

DON'T WORRY! EVERYTHING SEEMS FINE, RIGHT?

YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT I GUESS I'M JUST A BIT NERVOUS
TAP! TAP!

HEY! UMM HEY YOU
HEY UMM YOU'RE UGLY AND UMM DIS PLACE AIN'T BIG ENOUGH FOR THE BOTH OF US AND UMM AND I DON'T LIKE YOU! SO PUT 'EM UP!
I KNEW IT

SUCK THIS
WACK!

OK! WE CAN GO NOW!
COME HERE! I HAVE TO TALK TO YOU!

I'VE HAD ENOUGH!! YOU GOTTA TELL ME WHY THERE'S A FIGHT EVERY TIME WE WALK INTO A BAR!!
YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW? EVERYONE KNOWS WHY!
HUH?! WE'RE THE HEROES AND NO ONE TELLS US NOTHIN'!
THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE THE HEROES. I MEAN. NO ONE WANTS TO WATCH YOU GUYS
DRINKING QUIETLY 'N A BAR' I MEAN, THAT WOULD BE LIKE GIVING YOU A VACATION''
OH NOW I UNDERSTAND IT'S JUST A JOB HAZARD BUT HEY I'M PARCHED
HOLD ? I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING!
HEY! YOU! WOULD YOU LIKE TO EARN A GOLD COIN?
YEAH SURE WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO ?
YOU JUST HAVE TO GO INTO THAT BAR AND BUY US SOME DRINKS!
IT WON'T WORK
AND WHY NOT?
BECAUSE HE'S CARRYING THE TORCH NOW!
HE'S THE HERO NOW SO
OOPS! SORRY SIR!
!
KRASH
SHH. YOU COULD DIE OF THIRST BEING A HERO!

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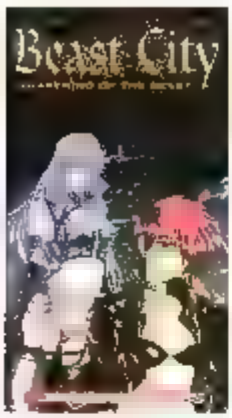

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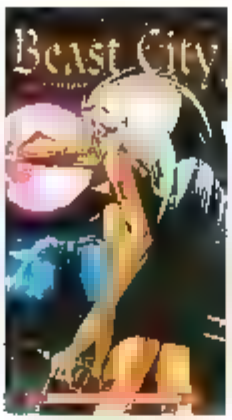

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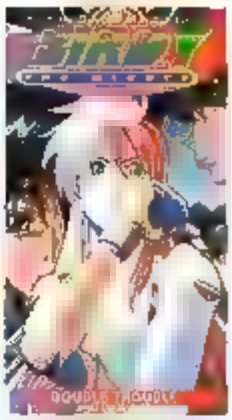

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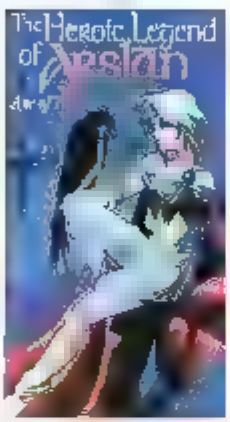

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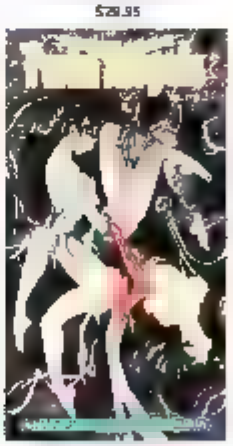

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STORM: THE SLAYER OF ERIBAN

Thank the stars: thought we were going to die of starvation, drifting through space. The Pandarvian gods must like us.
It doesn't look like one of those fishers you were talking about, Nomad!
I don't care what it looks like as long as it takes us somewhere better than here.
Many hours ago, Storm, Carroc and their Pandarvian friend, Nomad fled the small planetoid, Red Tear. They have been drifting about aimlessly ever since, riding the stem of a giant dandelion-like seed pod...
The storm that swept them off the planetoid's surface has died, and having narrowly escaped death at the hands of the Guardians, they now face starvation in the arid landscape of Pandarve's planetary system. But a set of blinking eyes signals life.
What's wrong with him. doesn't he see us?
If he doesn't change course he'll go right past us!
Damn. we're not close enough to be able to jump towards it in time. And the seed pod doesn't have enough reaction-mass to allow us to push ourselves off it.
HEYY! AHOY THERE!
Why doesn't he respond? It's as if he doesn't even notice that we're here!

One chance... we must do something to get his attention... Storm, do you still have that knife?
This is probably as close as it's going to get to us... no time to think about it... I'll have to trust my skill..
- and my luck!
When the rope's tension is cut, it whips around and Nomad manages to grab hold of one end.
Quick — grab hold of my legs, amigos... I've caught a big one!!!
Now let's try and find out if they're deaf, or just plain stupid.
Welcome aboard! If I may say so myself- BY PANDARVE'S BONES!!
2

My guess is he's dead..
It wasn't my fault. I never touched him.
This one's snuffed it too. . nothing but a pile of bones.
Call it a hunch, but this is probably why they didn't notice us.
STORM!! NOMAD!!
Come see what I found in the captain's cabin!
Would this have been the cargo they were hauling, do you think?
Well, I doubt they were out on some pleasure cruise, that's for sure!
3

Long before my time, on my planet, Earth, there were people called Egyptians. They used to make caskets like this one to bury their dead in and preserve them from the ravages of eternity. The sarcophagi were carved to form a likeness of the dead body they carried.
Hmm. I know of a people of the northern climes of Pandarve who also preserve their dead. They eat them in very cold winters when food is scarce.
HEY! It doesn't seem to be locked.
It's only a boy and a beautiful one too. Poor kid, to die so young.
I think he looks sad. Let's leave him in peace.
Maybe not. Nomad, another group of Earth people did that — The Jivaros. This child was embalmed like the Egyptians, only better. God, he almost looks alive.
Hmm... the difference in size is pretty strange. Almost as if that coffin was made to grow into.
Oh well. Let's see if there's anyone alive on board this old ship!

Obviously there's no one alive on deck or in the cabin, so we'd better search the hold for survivors. Somebody, somewhere knows what happened on board this ship
Hey! What a ship! The poor fools had sand from Earth!
You're right, Storm -- it's definitely Earth sand. A lot of ships use it for ballast. See, the planets of Pandarve each have different gravities. So ships use sand from the Earth because it is a planet with heavy gravity. That way, the crew won't float off the decks
A planet can't just choose the gravity it wants. Gravity is a force of nature. It's dependent on a planet's density and mass. And it's also quite impossible to disrupt. But then again, so many things on Pandarve are impossibilities, insults to any scientific view of the universe, so
STORM!!! HELP
STORM! LOOK HE'S ALIVE!
IT'S THE DEAD BOY -- YOU SEE? HE'S ALIVE.

seem to have found new servants. Pandarve smiles on me.
What are you talking about?" Besides, you're supposed to be dead. We just saw you in your coffin!
HAHAHA.. You have such little knowledge of the way of things. So be it .. You will learn. That's no coffin, but a regeneration capsule, personalized to my unique aura. Maybe that's why Pandarve sent me three servants to replace the two I had.. quantity to make up for quality
Regeneration capsule? What the hell are you talking about?
All in good time. First, get rid of these useless bones. Then I will start acquainting you with your tasks.
Wait a second, little boy. Your ship may have saved our lives, but that sure as hell doesn't make us your personal slaves
I can decapitate the three of you without so much as a second thought.
HEEEYY??
Hmm. you're obviously even less intelligent than thought possible. Let me introduce myself -- I am Renter Ka Rauw, professional assassin. I have spent my life so far studying at the Academy of Assassination on Erban and even idiots like you should realize that although I am clearly a recent graduate.

That's enough, kid!! You may have saved our lives, but I think you may need a little saving from yourself...
AAGHK!
Not bad, kid.. can see they teach a type of karate at that academy of yours.
Let's see if it comes back to me after all these millions of years
We... back on my own Earth I was pretty kung at it myself
HAI!!
It's too bad they taught you so poorly on this Earth of yours, stranger you might have made a fair assassin, assuming you had started your studies as a child. I do not yet so frighten my adversary. When I yell, my voice kills!
7

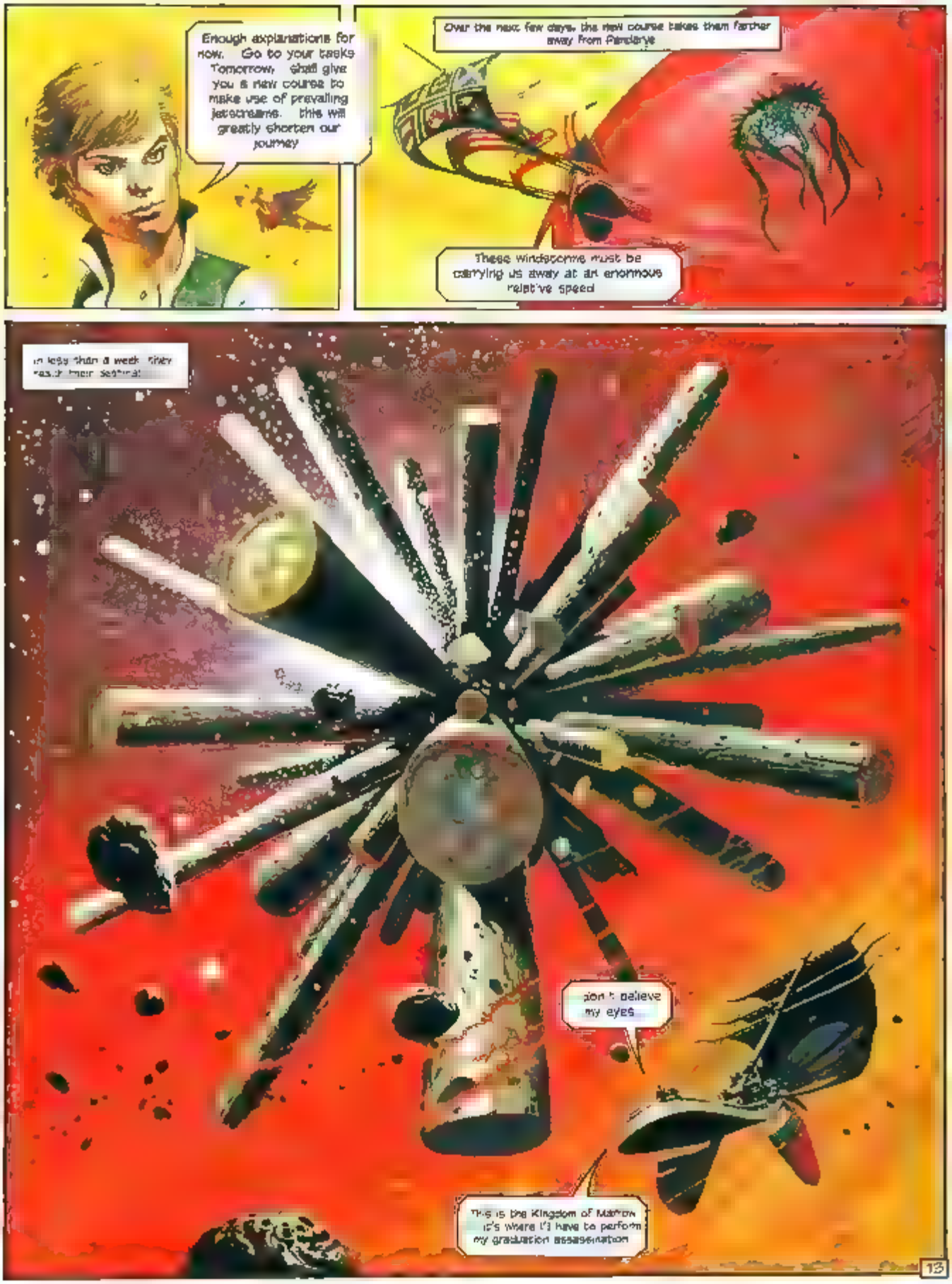
See? A lock of hair from the woman. Ask her if she felt anything. And look at your clothes. I could have opened your liver like a crate of fish with my thumbnail and you would only now start to feel it.
Yeah? Let's see you get out of this one!
can kill you with a touch, you big oaf
All right, Renter Ke Rauv. You win. What do you want from us?
Storm, are you serious? You're not giving in to that little twerp! I'll give the brat's backside a hiding he'll never forget.
Let me.
Be sensible, Carrot. The kid is trained in the martial arts and knows assassin tricks that we can't even imagine! Look at Nomad. All Renter did was press the right nerve!! He could probably do this while drinking his milk and not spill a drop. We'll just have to give in. FOR NOW!
8

You may call me "Master"
By the red thumb of Pandarve... Wh. What happened?
The woman can cook our meals. You two will sweep the bones from the deck. But first, kindly find yourselves some decent clothes. am used to having my servants look presentable, at the least.
Meanwhile, I will meditate on a new course for the ship.
can COOK, can I?! Why, I'll heat up his backside for him so he can fry eggs on 'em!! LET ME
Hold your horses, Carrot. Calm down. We'll have to wait for the right moment. Our time will come, promise you
Yeah, well, don't know about you, Storm, but that won't be too soon
have decided upon a new course.
Um. was wondering. Ah. Master. What happened to your ship and your men? How did you come to be adrift with a crew of skeletons?

As already told you, I studied at the Academy for Assassinations at Erban. Students there are only taken on at a very young age. In fact, as babies. Boys and girls alike are not allowed to know who their parents are. Our whole life is then devoted to the study of ending life!
I suppose Erban is a planet?
The next time you forget to say "master," I will make you pay dearly. Erban is almost a paradise -- almost any animal or vegetable life form found on Paradise and her children have been imported there to serve the academy's needs.
Like the prickly puff-adder we used in our games. But painful, anyway.
Only deadly when it bit you.
And learned to identify each of the more than fourteen thousand poisonous plants, fungi and moss... some by trial and error.
When we got older we had dangerous wild animals to train on for speed, strength, soundness and courage.
In the meantime, we mastered any kind of weapon used by man... and never was a student allowed to graduate without having killed at least one teacher.

Isn't it difficult to find new teachers if you treat them so roughly?
No, the teachers have a special mystical power -- they are able to summon dream effigies of themselves! Those we fight. Those we kill.
I understand. something like a hologram -- a working model of your teacher, which vanishes after employment. and your real teacher can congratulate you for getting good marks.
If you are allowed to graduate, the academy gives you your first official assignment -- a graduation assassination! And mine is to kill the monarch of a small kingdom not far away from here.
Then how could it be that we found you adrift in this ship with two skeletons on deck. "master?"

We were attacked by a Manganese swarm!
That can't be... those are merely tall stories from old space sailors!!
HERE, MASTER!! We cannot escape, and the swarm is too wide across to avoid!
AAAH!! THE MANGANESSE!
The Manganese is a legendary, flying insect that moves in swarms of millions through the atmosphere of Pandorva, voraciously destroying everything in its path
Death is sudden, and certain — there is no hope for any unfortunate who falls prey to the Manganese. The swarm then moves on aimlessly, leaving behind a trail of destruction from which all life is burned away
"My servants sacrificed themselves for me: as their mission dictates them to- Whilst keeping the ship on course, reached my regeneration capsule just in time and was then made invulnerable to the Manganese."
The regeneration capsule is given to us by the academy. It is personalized to my unique aura and when I'm in it, it cures me of the most serious injuries and diseases. It puts me into an artificial sleep state.
- And time doesn't exist in a regeneration capsule. Once closed, it can only be opened from the outside!
But your servants died. Looks like we arrived just in time.
12


Enough explanations for now. Go to your tasks. Tomorrow, I shall give you a new course to make use of prevailing jetstreams. This will greatly shorten our journey
Over the next few days, the new course takes them farther away from Pandarve
These windscreens must be carrying us away at an enormous relative speed
In less than a week, they reach their destination
I don't believe my eyes
This is the Kingdom of Marrow. It's where I'll have to perform my graduation assassination
13

have to find out more about conditions in this kingdom before I make my plans. The safest place to prepare is in a small port like this
...orm and Nomad, you two will guard the ship ...ake the woman and ...rown with me
Know yo... two care about her so don... do anything foolish like sailing away or she will die. As will you both when ...crack you down as I swear I will
...places where I would attract attention because of my age, you can act as my older sister ...or mother
HMMM
...mber to kill the king of this place. First have to find a way to get close to him. Therefore, I need to... ...eath?! What's all that ...commotion over there?

It looks to be some sort of sporting event. Let's take a look. maybe it'll tell us something about the character of these people
I hope this covers the entrance fee for me and my sister, maiden?
You're obviously not from around here, youngster. Enjoy your first baseball game
It looks like some crazy variation of gladiatorial combat
Uh, could you explain the rules of this game to me, sir?
BARSAMAN
BARSAMAN
LET THE VALIANT STRIVE, AND THE STRONG SURVIVE!
Baseball doesn't have many rules, young man. It's every man, woman and child for his or herself. The only rule is that in the end, there is only one winner- you'll see... Still, it is a game of consummate tactical skill, but wait .. it begins. I will show you the finer points as it progresses.

See? The pillars on which the fighters stand are slowly sinking into the sand.
HERE BEGINS THE END OF THE GAME!
But they do not all sink at the same speed. And never in the same configuration. So nobody knows what to expect.
See, this is where tactics come into play. You have to oversee the field and see where the weak points are, saving your arms and your competitors' arms and fighting prowess into account in order to fight your way to the top.
Like the guy with the staff! I've seen brick fighters like him win a game. But this one is not so lucky, or smart;!
In the end there is only one pillar left above the sand and the fighter who has tricked or fought his way to it and managed to retain it against all others is the winner ..
THE BARBMAN!!
The crowd goes wild as the winner triumphantly rises upward on his pillar
If you think this is deadly, wait till you see the Holy Barbball game that's held each year in the capital.
The floor of the arena there is not sand but burning, molten LAVA!
It seems like a vicious and deadly sport to me

In the Holy game of Barsball there is only one survivor and he is crowned as winner by the King of Marrow himself
That sounds very interesting
It is. It is! You see, the King has no heirs, and the winner of the Holy game is declared crown prince or princess for that year. If the king dies during your year, the throne is yours. If he lives to the next Holy game, you are bound to compete again. Only seldom have there been winners who repeated their glory
Barsball isn't just a game -- it's a religion. It fills our lives and gives color and excitement to our drab existence. Every day there's a game in every town and community of the kingdom of Marrow. I suppose it's true that many people are killed, but at least once a year they have the chance to win glory and fame.
He should have taken the big guy with the hammers first and then gone on to the sword fighter. That would have given her a better approach line.
May we offer you a refreshment, sir?
No! He would have been wiser to
See? Even the children play barsball. It's the center of our lives!
You have given me much to think about and thank you, sir
He doesn't know it, but he's just told me how to perform my graduation assassination. We'll have to sail onwards to the capital
What is that crowd doing around my ship?!
17

Check and mate!
Again?
BARSAMAN BARSAMAN
BARSAMAN!
In the name of Enyel, what's going on here?
I've been using my spare time to carve a set of chess pieces from soap. I'm teaching Nomad here the finer points of how to lose every time. The people here seem to like it, don't they?
Get aboard! Get aboard! We don't have time for silly games!
Stranger. Can buy this Barsball game of you?!?
Show us another game, Stranger!
It is called chess in my homeland, and I'm afraid I don't have the time.
Come on, show us how to play
AWAY. BE GONE! We're leaving!
Later
?!?!!
Hoist the sails. I want to make use of the trade winds around here!
I'll let you have another chance tonight, Nomad.
Mister, will you teach me that game you call "chess"?
18

What's going on?
We've found ourselves a stowaway, "Master."
No, sir. Just wanted you to teach me the game.
What shall we do with this little rapscallion, Master?
Throw him overboard!
Heyyy... I was only joking... We'll just sail back to the harbor and leave him ashore.
won't do any harm, sire... Honest, won't.
When I speak, expect to be obeyed at all times. don't have time to waste on this wretched creature!
NN-AHH! HELP!
What do you think you're doing!? You can't just throw that boy to his death!!!
Oh, don't be so sentimental. he has a fifty-fifty chance of being picked up by a fishing boat.

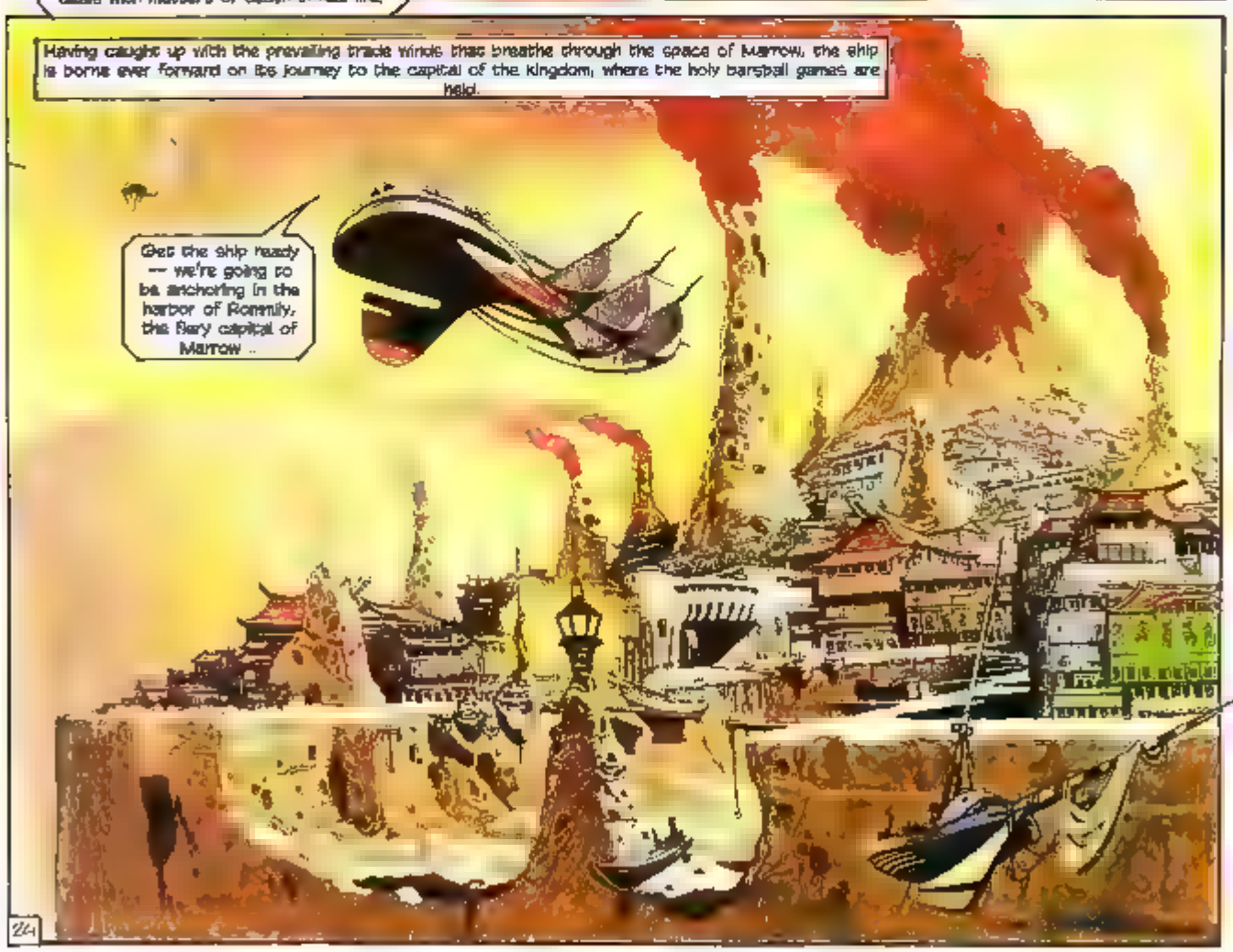
Remember, I am the master of all life and death, including yours.
You can forget about being master of anything IF you don't pick up that boy. We've had just about enough of you. Now, maybe you can defeat all of us, but then you'll just have to sail this ship alone because we won't live to do it for you, will we Ranter Ka Rauw?
SILENCE, cur! Go back to your ?
HELP!!
HELP! PLEASE... HELP ME!
AAAYYEEEH!
HOLD TIGHT, KID! I'M COMING!
Storm!! Those sheets are going to get him!!
Space scavengers!
Without a moment's hesitation, Storm launches himself over the side of the floating ship. Within a split second, Ranter Ka Rauw follows.
20

While Storm tries desperately to find the sheal's weak spot, Ramzer Ka Rasny draws the attention of the other space scavenger, keeping it occupied.
In a glistening blur, Storm's knife suddenly probes deep into the vulnerable nerve coil hidden by the sheal's iron jaws. The beast viciously whips away, thereby sealing its fate.
By the stinking entrails of Pandarve -- Storm needs me! But this damned ship won't sail by itself
Get as close as you can... quickly, Nomad; I found this in the hold.
HOLD ON KID! I'LL SWIM TOWARDS YOU!
told you to call me MASTER!

Steady
Steady
You think I'm steering
Carrot shoots off her deadly arrow
There was no need for you to come
Alright kid
Tillo,
Now pay close attention Tillo.
Trying to appear nonchalant, Ranger Ka
22

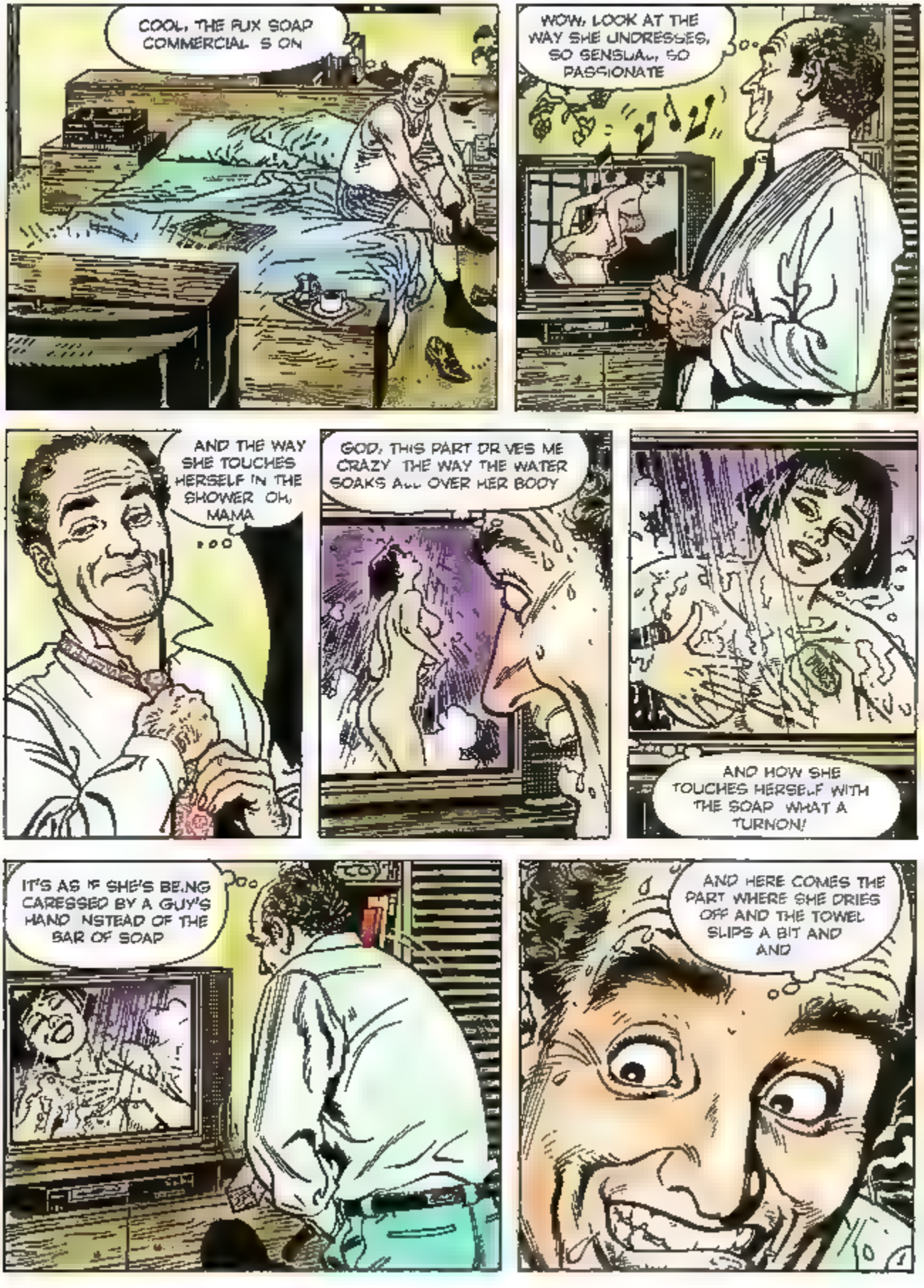
After the deadly incident with the shad creatures, the ship sails on for days, cruising uneventfully a daily routine establishes itself As the ship plies the airways, Storm continues to teach Tilo the game of chess ..
You always have to try and think a few moves ahead. guess what your opponent might be planning. very much like in real life, in fact
Suppose I move this piece over here. ?
When he isn't taking turns with Nomad, steering the ship on the course given by their young captain
Thanks, Storm. needed to stretch my legs a little.
Poor Carrot has been assigned to the galley where else?
Rotten pigs! Men are the same all over the universe, Tilo
But but am a man too, Carrot!
When Storm and Tilo play chess, Ranter Ka Rauw, the assassin always seems to be meditating nearby
CHECK!!
Good for you, Tilo, you're learning!
Until one day
It's simple to win from such a young and inexperienced child, Storm. I wonder if you dare matching your luck with me?
Well, you're fooling yourself if you think luck has anything to do with it. Still, you're welcome to try against me.
But Ranter Ka Rauw had underestimated the intricacies of chess.
Checkmate
Warn you for the last time, servant!!! Call me MASTER!
In my country a chess player can only become a master by winning more often than losing. "master!"
23

For someone who learned the game only by watching, you did amazingly well, Master Ranter
It's a stupid, childish game — hardly worth the time of a professional who deals with matters of death in real life!
You see, Tilo? Our impetuous young master's pride has been hurt. He doesn't want to admit it, but he's just found a challenge that can't be so easily overcome. It's easy to lose at cards, or in sports, but losing in chess is like dying inside.
Just like Baseball!
Exactly! Just like baseball, it has a field with limited positions. It takes insight and tactics to consolidate your place on the board and keep on moving towards a winning position. The main difference is that if you lose, you live to play another game


Having caught up with the prevailing trade winds that breathe through the space of Marrow, the ship is borne ever forward on its journey to the capital of the kingdom, where the holy barsball games are held.
Get the ship ready — we're going to be anchoring in the harbor of Rommily, the fiery capital of Marrow..
24

CONTINUED ON PAGE 106

THE FASCINATION OF TELEVISION


COOL, THE FUX SOAP COMMERCIAL S ON
WOW, LOOK AT THE WAY SHE UNDRESSES, SO SENSUAL, SO PASSIONATE
AND THE WAY SHE TOUCHES HERSELF IN THE SHOWER OH, MAMA
GOD, THIS PART DRIVES ME CRAZY THE WAY THE WATER SOAKS ALL OVER HER BODY
AND HOW SHE TOUCHES HERSELF WITH THE SOAP WHAT A TURNON!
IT'S AS IF SHE'S BEING CARESSED BY A GUY'S HAND INSTEAD OF THE BAR OF SOAP
AND HERE COMES THE PART WHERE SHE DRIES OFF AND THE TOWEL SLIPS A BIT AND AND

AND FOR ONE MILLISECOND YOU CAN SEE A NIPPLE, HARD AND ERECT
NOW, SHE LETS GO OF THE SOAP.
SHE TREMBLES OOPS, SHE SLIPS IN THE TUB.
IF I COULD JUST TOUCH HER, I KNOW COULD MAKE HER REAL
ARE YOU READY DEAR?
GAH! BACK TO THE ANNOYING SOUND OF REALITY
AH, YES MY LOVE
WELL THEN, COME ON
YES, OF COURSE
AND HELP ME WITH THIS ZIPPER
UM?
CAREFUL TRY NOT TO PINCH ME
DON'T WORRY
I'LL TRY NOT TO SNAG ANY OF YOUR CELLULITE
READY?
SUP-POSE SO
AS IF I HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICE
PLOP!
YES, MY DEAR?
HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT US BUYING A 40 INCH TV?
2

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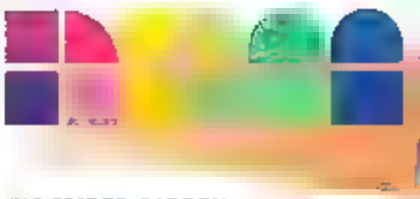

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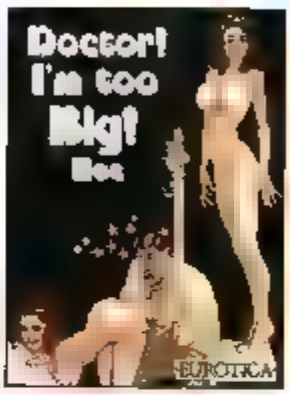

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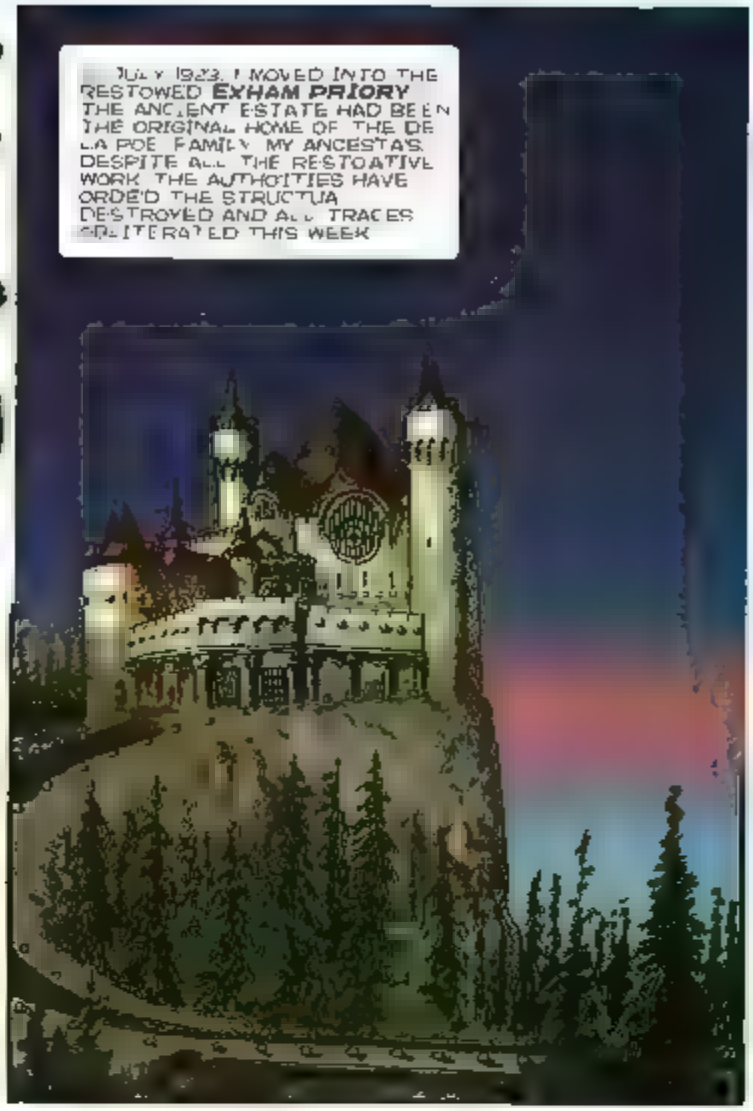

JULY 1923. I MOVED INTO THE RESTOWED EXHAM PRIORY THE ANCIENT ESTATE HAD BEEN THE ORIGINAL HOME OF THE DE LA POE FAMILY MY ANCESTAS. DESPITE ALL THE RESTOATIVE WORK THE AUTHOITIES HAVE ORDE'D THE STRUCTUA DESTROYED AND ALL TRACES OBLITERATED THIS WEEK

I AM THE LAST OF THE DELAPOE'S. UNDOUBTEDLY, THE NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES WILL BE RELIEVED WHEN THE DELAPOE'S ARE GONE FOREVA

TEXT © 1945 DONALD WANDREI.
ARTWORK © 1972 RICHARD CHRIEN

THEY HAVE LONG HATED AND FEA'D MY FAMILY. THOUGH MY PROGENITA HAD MOVED TO VIRGINIA MANY GENERATIONS AGO. I DIDN'T KNOW OF THE STRANGE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDIN' WALTA DE LA POE'S FLIGHT TO AMERICA. IT WAS THEN HE CHANGED THE SPELLIN' TO DELAPOE

MY FOREBEA RELATED NOTHING OF HIS CLOUDED PAST TO HIS DESCENDENTS IT WAS MY SON, WHILE IN ENGLAND AS AN AWMY AVIATA WHO DISCOVED THE EXISTENCE OF EXHAM PRIOR

THROUGH HIS BRITISH FRIEND, EDWARD NOWYS IT SEEMS THAT THE RUINED ESTATE HAD FALLEN INTO THE HANDS OF THE NOWYS FAMILY MY SON HAD WRITTEN OF IT OFTEN

HIS HOME COMIN WAS NOT A HAPPY ONE THE WAR HAD MAIMED HIM, I CARED FO MY BOY FO TWO YEARS THEN HE D IED

WITH NO FAMILY LEFT, I RESOLVED TO BUY AND RESTO THE ANCIENT EDIFICE NOWYS TOOK AN INTEREST AND HELPED ME IN MY ENDEAVAS. HIS FRIENDLINESS WAS SURPRISINGLY NOT TYPICAL OF THE OTHER SULLEN NATIVES

IT IS AN ODD MIXTURE OF ARCHITECTURE GOTHIC TOWERS RESTING ON A SAXON SUBSTRUCTURE WHOSE FOUNDATIONS IN TURN ARE OF A STILL EARLIER BLEND OF ORDERS
ROMAN, EVEN DRUID OR NATIVE CYMRIC

THERE IS A VAGUE LINK BETWEEN OUR FAMILIES THE LEGEND AND TALES SURROUNDING THIS PLACE AND YOUR ANCESTRY ARE QUITE INCREDIBLE THE WORST CHARACTERS WERE THE BARONS APPARENTLY THERE WAS AN INNER CULT WITHIN THE FAMI

GRISLY STORIES SURVIVE IN GUARDED WHISPERS. A MARY DE LA POER MARRIED THE EARL OF SHREWSFIELD. HE **KILLED** HER BUT WAS ABSOLVED OF ALL GUILT BY THE CHURCH WHEN HER HORRIBLE HABITS WERE REVEALED.

THERE WAS MENTION OF A SQUEALING WHITE **THING** WHICH SIR JOHN CLAVE ENCOUNTERED IN THE DAMP STENCH FILLED GRAVEYARD.

THEN THERE WAS THE SERVANT WHO WENT **RAVING MAD** AT WHAT HE SAW IN THE PRIORY IN FULL DAYLIGHT

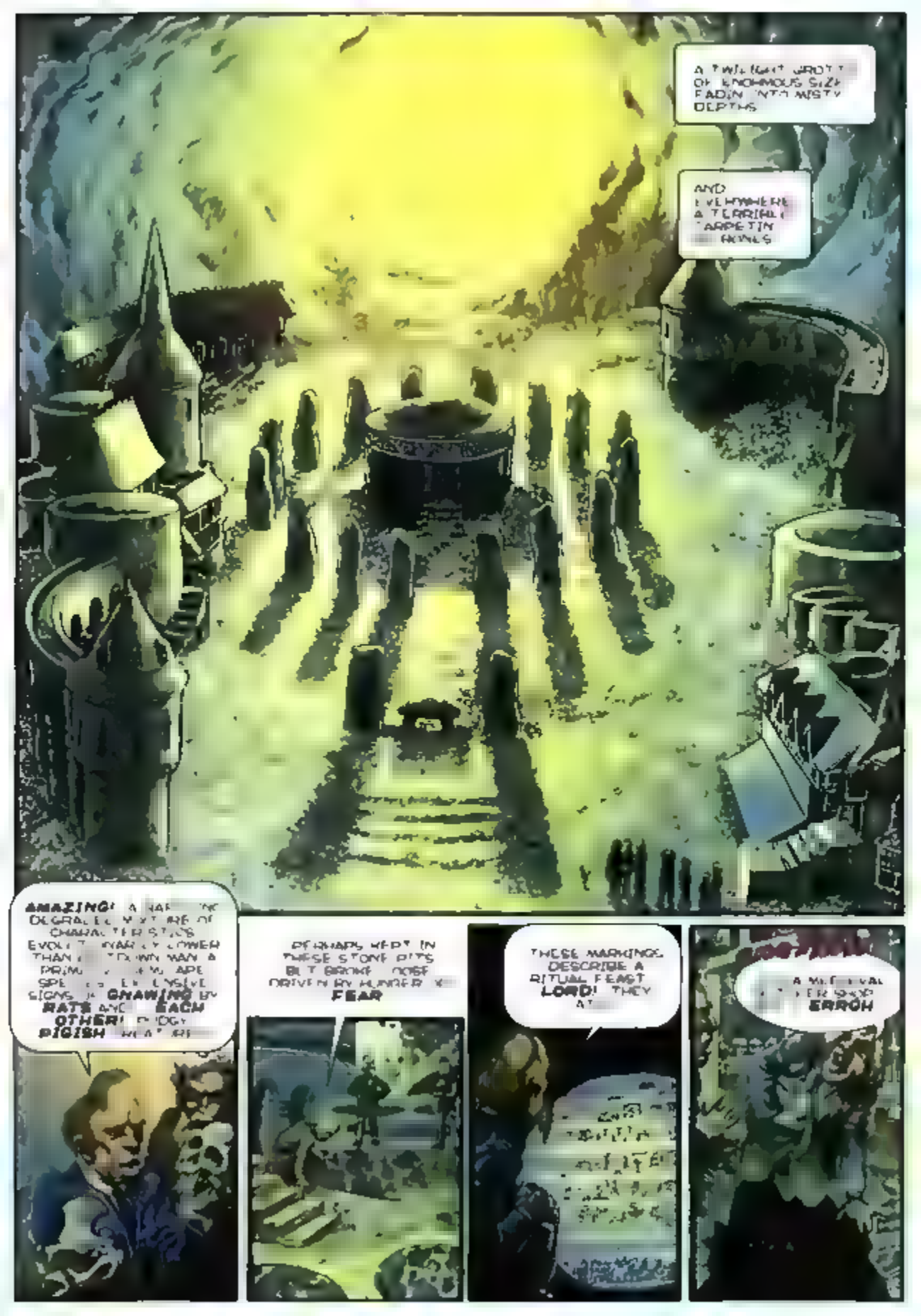
BUT THE MOST VIVID HORROR OF ALL WAS THE EPIC OF THE **RATS** - A SCAMPERING ARMY OF OBSCENE VERMIN. THEY BURST FORTH FROM THE CASTLE THREE MONTHS AFTER YOUR ANCESTOR DESERTED IT. THE FILTHY RAVENOUS MASS DEVOURED OWL, CATS, DOGS, HOGS **EVEN TWO HAPLESS PEASANTS**

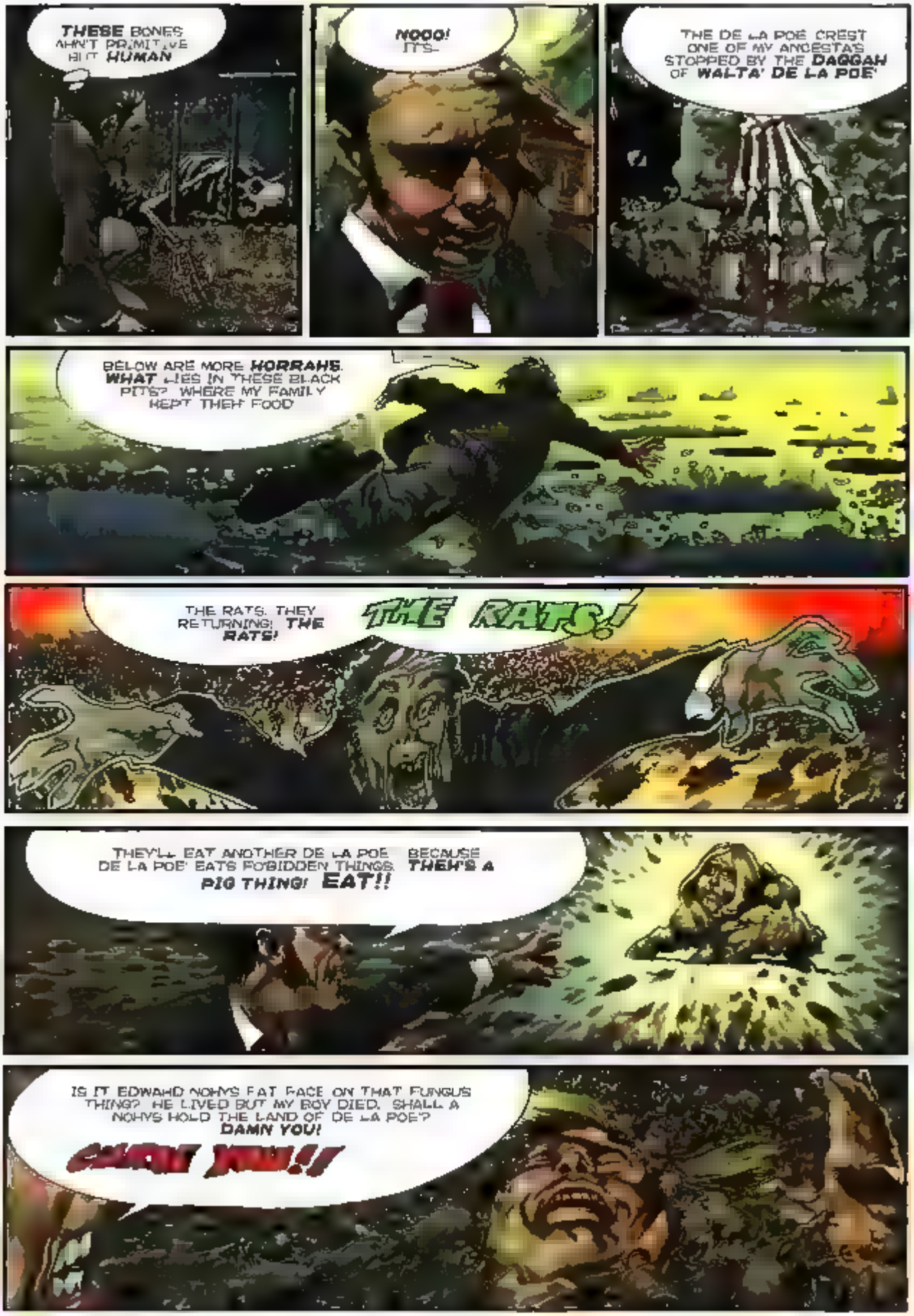
WHAT ABOUT WALTA DE LA POE? WHY DID HE FLEE TO AMERICA?
THE ACCOUNTS ARE RATHER CIRCUMSTANTIAL ON THAT. HE WAS ACCUSED OF KILLING HIS ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD WITH THE AID OF FOUR SERVANTS. THIS HAPPENED AFTER A SHOCKING DISCOVERY WHICH CHANGED HIS WHOLE DEMEANOR.
THE NATURE OF THIS DISCOVERY WAS NEVER BROUGHT TO LIGHT. WELL, I MUST GO NOW, SETH. THE ROAST PORK WAS EXQUISITE. I HOPE YOU'LL INVITE ME AGAIN SOON.
UGH. THE DAMP AIR HAS AMPLIFIED THE UNDERTONE OF FETID FOULNESS. EH? SHUT UP CAT!
RRROURR
SIR, ALL THE CATS WERE AMAZINGLY RESTLESS LAST NIGHT, AS IF EXCITED BY THE ODOR OF RATS.
PECULIAR. THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ANY RATS IN EXHAM FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS. SET SOME TRAPS
WHAT HAD WALTA DE LA POE WITNESSED THAT SENT HIM SLAUGHTERIN' HIS FAMILY? HMM...
AAAGH
MEOWRRR
HISSSS

RUSTLE
RUSTLE
SKITTER
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
RATS!! MILLIONS OF THEM!
I COULD SWEA' THIS TAPESTRY WAS MOVING THE TRAPS ARE SPRUNG WHAT ARN'T THE OTHA ROOMS?
RRROURRR FST!
LORD GAWD ALMIGHTY! THEY'S BEHIND THE PANEL (NG!
SKITTER
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
THE NOISE IS DEAF'NIN THEY'S TRAVELLIN DOWN TOWA'D THE CELLA
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
TWITTER
TWITTLE
SIR! THE CATS ARE ALL IN A SNARLING PANIC THEY'VE RUN TO THE SUBCELLAR DOOR
THE RATS! DON'T YOU HEA' THEM?
RATS? WE HEARD NO RATS SIR JUST THE CATS
IT WAS AWFUL NOWHS, COME AND SPEND THE NIGHT HELP ME DISCOVA THE CAUSE OF THIS MANIFESTATION
THIS VAULT THE LOWEST IN THE PRIORY WAS BUILT BY ROMAN HANDS. MUSTY AND DAMP. JUST BEING HERE MAKES ME FEEL UNEASY BUT WE WON'T MISS YOUR RATS IF THEY APPEAR
THESE INSCRIPTIONS ATVS THOSE HIDEOUS EASTEN RITES

GAUGH!!
MROWR
DEL APORE! WHAT IS IT?
HSSST
SPFFT
MEOW
THE RATS! THEY DESCEND FURTHAH YET!
MEOWR
ALL CAN HEAR IS YOUR HOWLING CAT
AH! YOU DEAF? ..OH. NOW THE SOUND SUBSIDES.
HE SMELLS SOME THING BELOW THIS PRE-ROMAN ALTAR.
LOOK AT THE CANDLE
THERES OBVIOUSLY A CHAMBER BELOW THIS ONE PERHAPS JUST A NARROW FISSURE EXTENDING FROM THE CLIFF FACE
I CANNOT LEAVE MATTA'S AS THEY AH I MUST KNOW
SUGGEST WE CONTACT SOME ARCHAEOLOGIST AND SCIENTIST FRIENDS OF MINE I'M SURE THEY'D LIKE TO BE IN ON THIS.
SOON.
ALL OF BARON MORRY'S FRIENDS HAVE ARRIVED SIR
GOOD PUT THEM IN THE GAWDEN WING WE'LL BEGIN THE EXPLORATION TOMORRA I FEEL I'M POISED ON THE BRINK OF FRIGHTFUL REVELATIONS.
THAT NIGHT THE UNWHOLESOME DREAMS AGAIN

BY ELEVEN THE NEXT DAY THE EXPERTS WERE EXAMINING THE ANCIENT ALTAR. SIR WILLIAM BRINTON MEASURED THE STONE
AH HA! AS I THOUGHT THERE IS A COUNTER WEIGHT. THE ALTAR SWINGS OPEN.
UTTERLY FANTASTIC
I'M AFRAID THEY'RE NOT QUITE HUMAN.
GHASTLY PILES OF BONES! HUNDREDS OF SKELETONS, SPRAWLED IN ATTITUDES OF PANIC AND FEAR
THIS PASSAGEWAY CARVED FROM SOLID ROCK- ...FROM BELOW!
APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN GNAWED BY RODENTS
A DIM LIGHT AHEAD.
CHOKE


A TWILIGHT GROTTO OF ENORMOUS SIZE FADING INTO MISTY DEPTHS
AND EVERYWHERE A TERRIBLE CARPETING OF BONES
AMAZING! A MARKING OF DEGRADED VESTIGES OF CHARACTERISTICS EVOLUTIONARILY LOWER THAN EVEN THE DOWNWARD PRIMITIVE APE SPECIES EXCLUSIVE SIGNS OF GNAWING BY RATS AND EACH OTHER! BIOLOGY PIGISH
PERHAPS KEPT IN THESE STONE PITS BUT BROUGHT HOME DRIVEN BY HUNGER AND FEAR
THESE MARKINGS DESCRIBE A RITUAL FEAST LORD! THEY ATE
A MEDIEVAL TORTURER'S TERROR


THESE BONES AIN'T PRIMITIVE BUT HUMAN
NOOO! IT'S-
THE DE LA POE CREST ONE OF MY ANCESTA'S STOPPED BY THE DAGGAH OF WALTA' DE LA POE'
BELOW ARE MORE HORRAHS. WHAT LIES IN THESE BLACK PITS? WHERE MY FAMILY KEPT THEH FOOD
THE RATS. THEY RETURNING! THE RATS!
THE RATS!
THEY'LL EAT ANOTHER DE LA POE. BECAUSE DE LA POE' EATS FORBIDDEN THINGS. THEH'S A PIG THING! EAT!!
IS IT EDWAHD NOHYS FAT FACE ON THAT FUNGUS THING? HE LIVED BUT MY BOY DIED. SHALL A NOHYS HOLD THE LAND OF DE LA POE'? DAMN YOU!
DAMN YOU!!

WE ALWAYS GREW OUWAH OWN FOOD
KEPT 'EM IN THE PITS
BACK THROUGH RECORDED HISTORY WE ATE THEM AND BEYOND
JNG! JNG! WHLH! CHCHCH!
OH MY GOD! IT'S DELAPORE! ..AND NORRYS CHOKED!
HE, HE, HE, HE!
THE FOOLS! NOW THEY BLOW UP EXHAM PRIORY MY HOME THEY SAID MY FAMILY KEPT SUBHUMANS TO EAT SAID I ATE NORYS, THAT PIG HE WAS AN ACTUAL DIRECT DESCENDENT OF OUR PIGGY STOCK BUT I DIDN'T EAT HIM. IT WAS THE RATS. THE RATS NEVAH LET ME SLEEP. THE DAEMON RATS BECKON ME DOWN TO CREATA HORRAHS. THE RATS! THE RATS IN THE WALLS!

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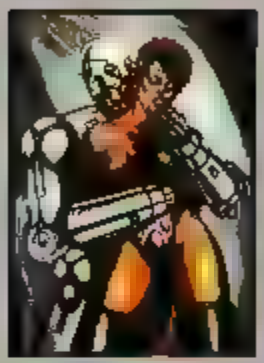
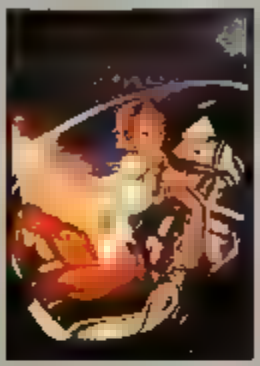


1 OVI HONDRU

1A-LUIS ROYO



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2A- SIMON BISLEY

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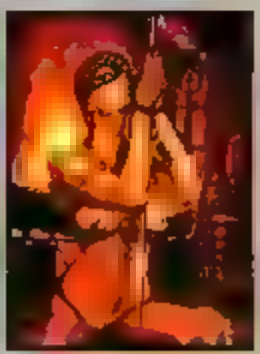

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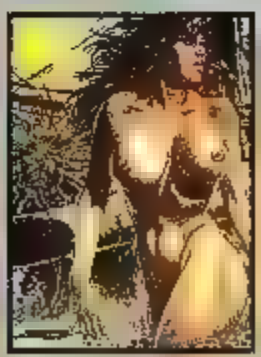

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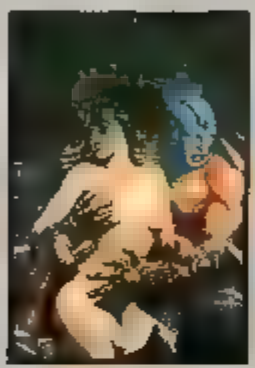

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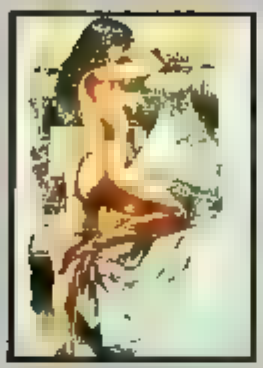

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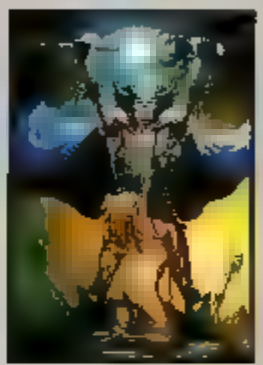

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ARI-L

Your name was *Ari-L*. You were a child of *Ones* and you lived in *Omphalos*, the city of love.

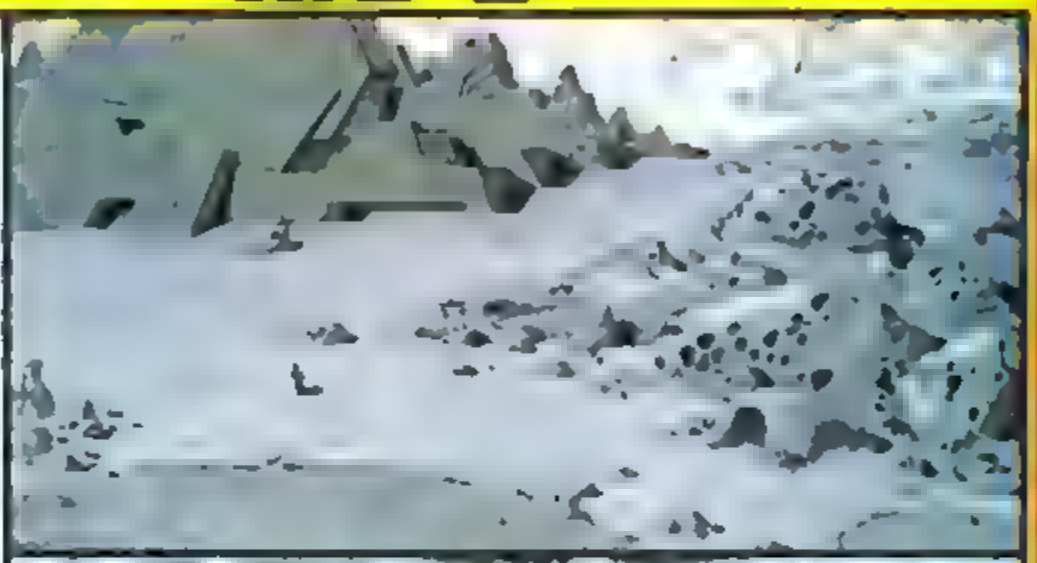
But most of your time was spent away from *Omphalos*, on the shores of the *Sea of Serenity*.

For *Omphalos* weighed on your [illegible] heart was the [illegible] and proud in its obsidian [illegible].

You preferred the shore of the *Sea of Serenity* [illegible] of course, serenity.

The hut you built there was made of petrified wood and it was as heavy as the minerals found on the bottom of dead seas.

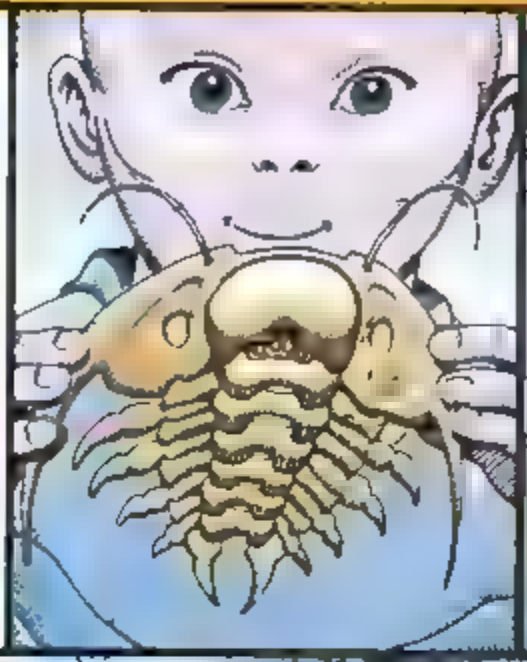
You decorated your [illegible] flowers and [illegible] out of [illegible].

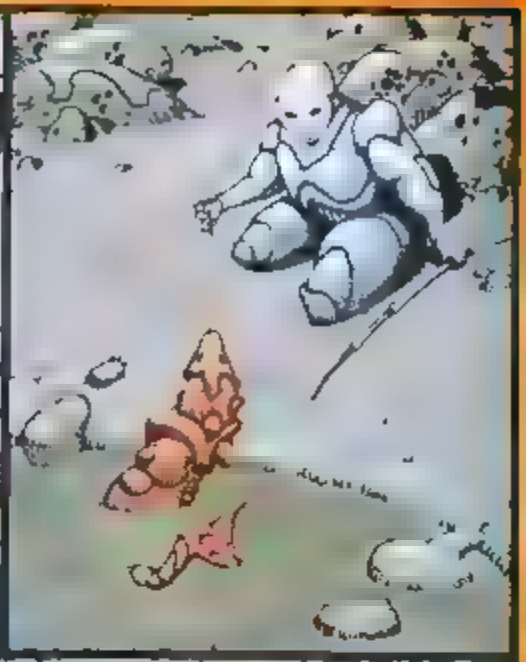


During his long lonely walks on the shore *Art-L* managed to forget the placental life of *Omphalos*, which was gradually devouring the *Ome*

Sometimes you fished for stone crabs with fragile antennae, or for telescopic marine creatures with lepidolithe shells

And sometimes, at low tide, you collected fat, heavy, bivalve molluscs, their disgusting nudes appearing to scowl at the world. Yet their beautiful pearly shells could serve as a sea-worthy craft





It was thus, that one morning, *Art-L*, the child of *Ome*, set sail on the *Sea of Serenity*

On one of the cockles of a mollusk, he stuck a bone mast with six tentacles and over it stretched a fine web woven by an *Arachne* (a large synthetic spider that feeds on the smell of storms. It is illiterate and somber. In winter, it weaves its web across the tall megaliths of *Ompholos*.)

And the gentle solar winds blew on his fragile craft, pushing it towards the dusty, distant horizon

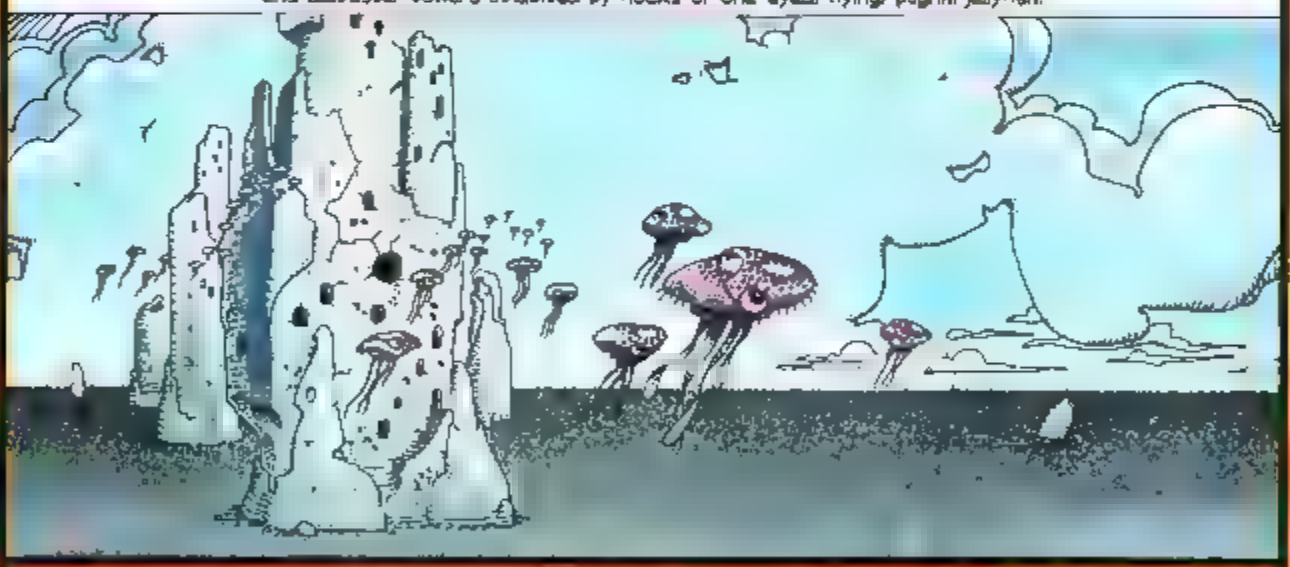
He filled the mollusk's second cockle with a supply of salt flowers, water-laden pears, the gritty flesh of insects, and his collection of living memories to keep him busy during the voyage.

He was followed for several miles by a *Groc* (a bio-mechanical flute-bird whose melancholy song enchanted Arn-ul). But when its batteries began to run low, the lone Groc flew back to *Ompholos*

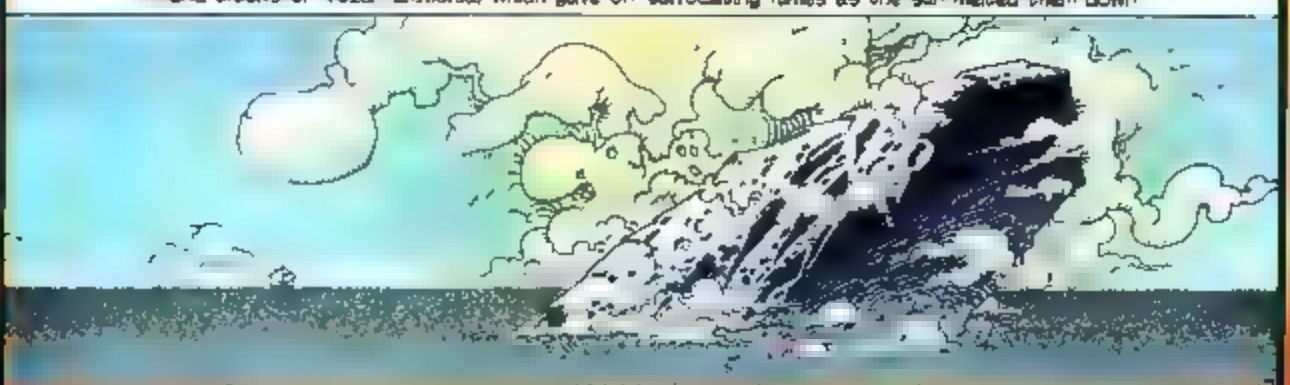
The voyage was long. (One long One-day. On slow-orbiting *Omni*, a day is as long as a lunar month.) Monotony set in

Along the way *Arr-L* spotted many small isles: there were jet-black lava rocks, coagulated volcanic eruptions

and alabaster towers inhabited by flocks of one-eyed, flying, pilgrim jellyfish.

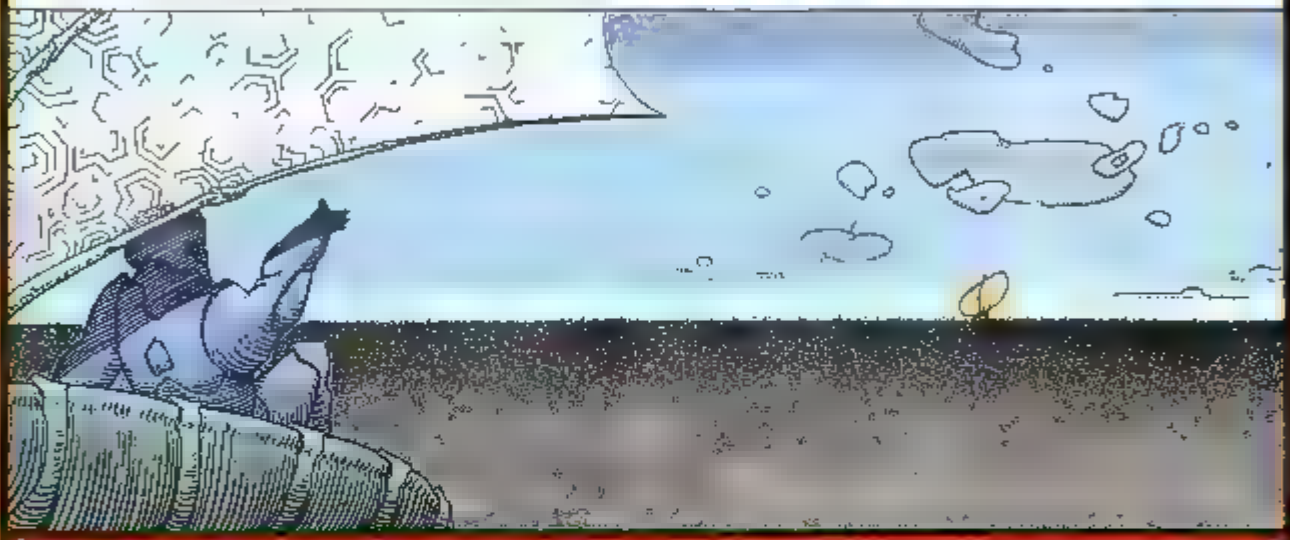


and blocks of frozen ammonia, which gave off suffocating fumes as the sun melted them down

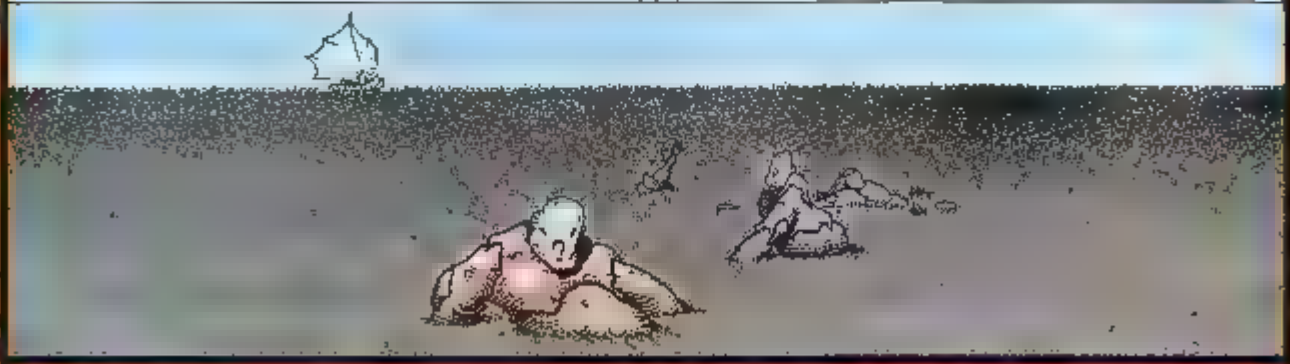


Once, he had to navigate around the skull of a sea elephant. He advanced very cautiously. (The skull is the only part of sea elephants that has ever been seen, but it is rumored that their huge bodies burn with a slow flame under the ashes.)

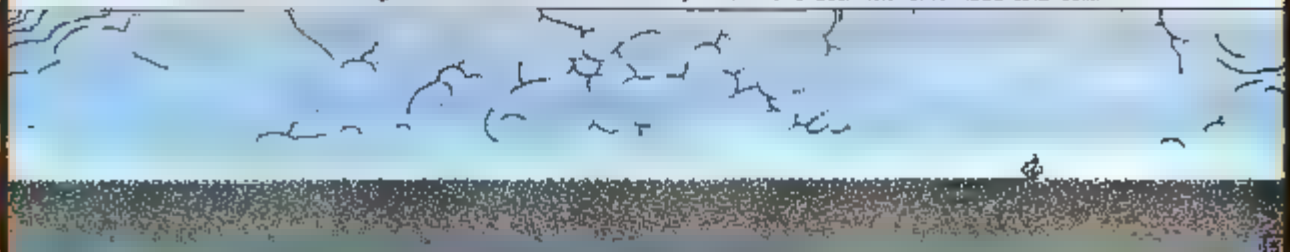
Once, he saw another voluntary sailor, drifting slowly over the heavy asphalt sea. (Ahoy there!)

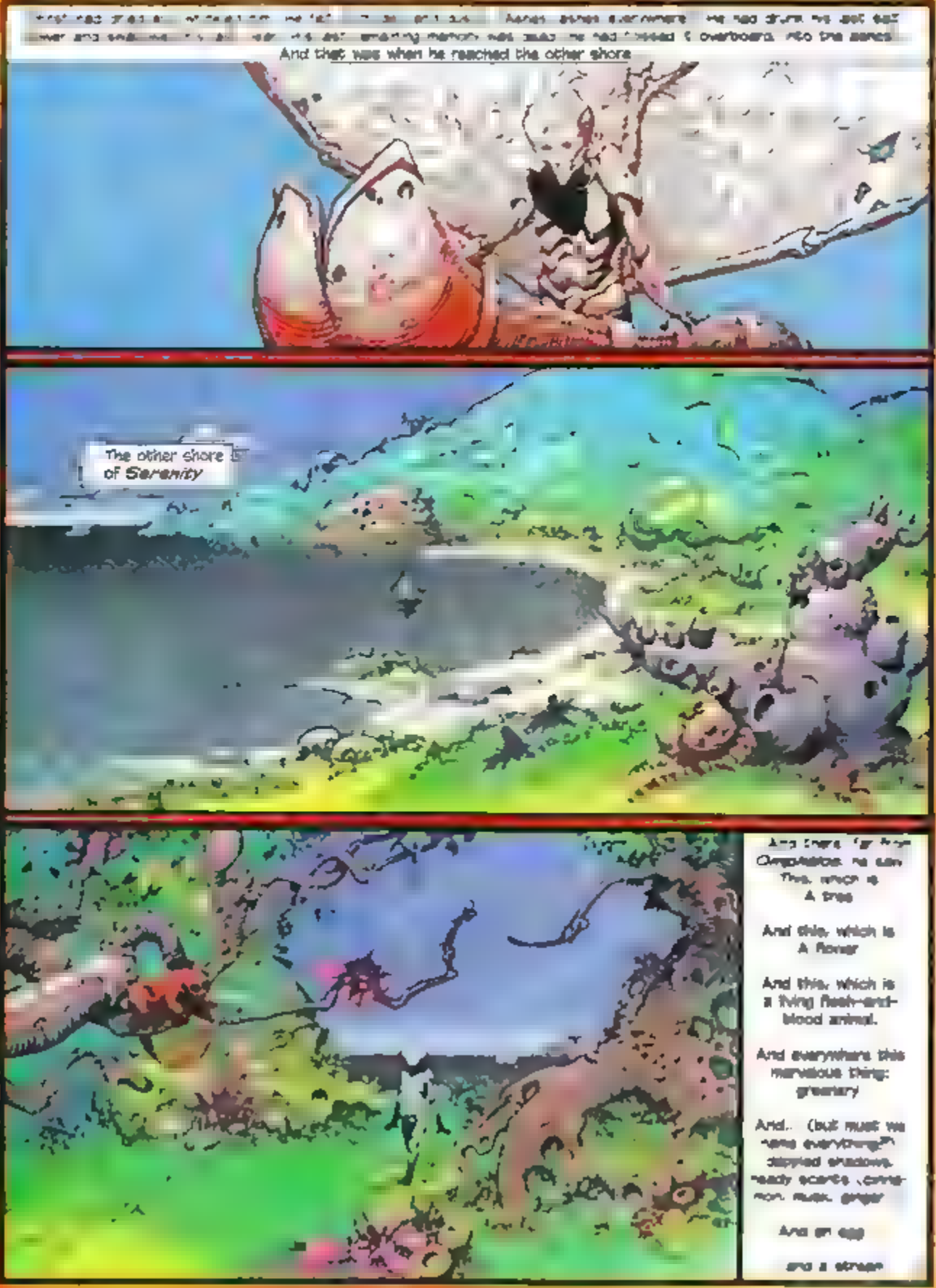


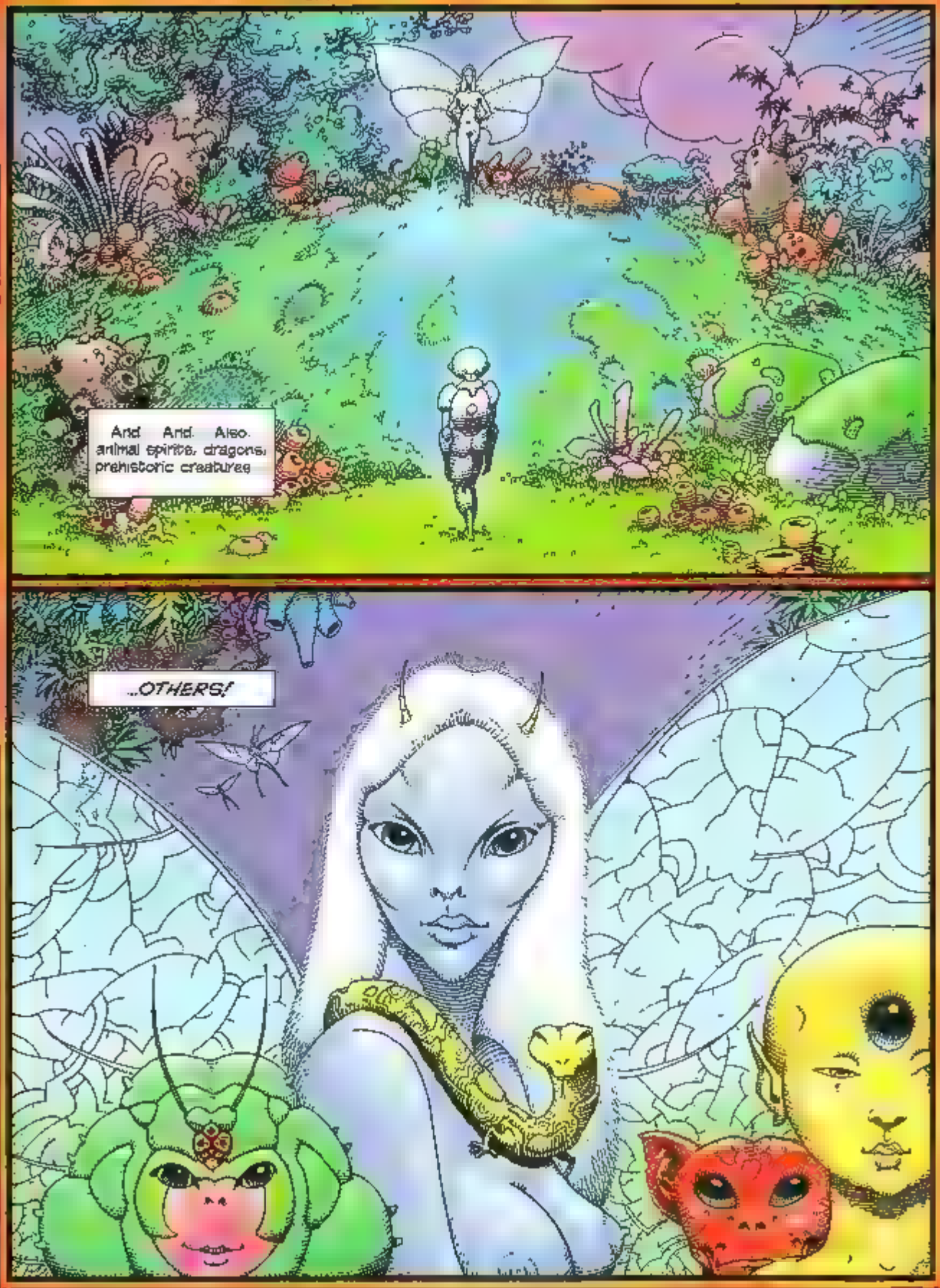
Another time, he saw several lost *Omis* (refugees from a dead city) shipwrecked and mired in the sea. (This was in 666 in the era of *Omi*, a dark age when many cities died.)

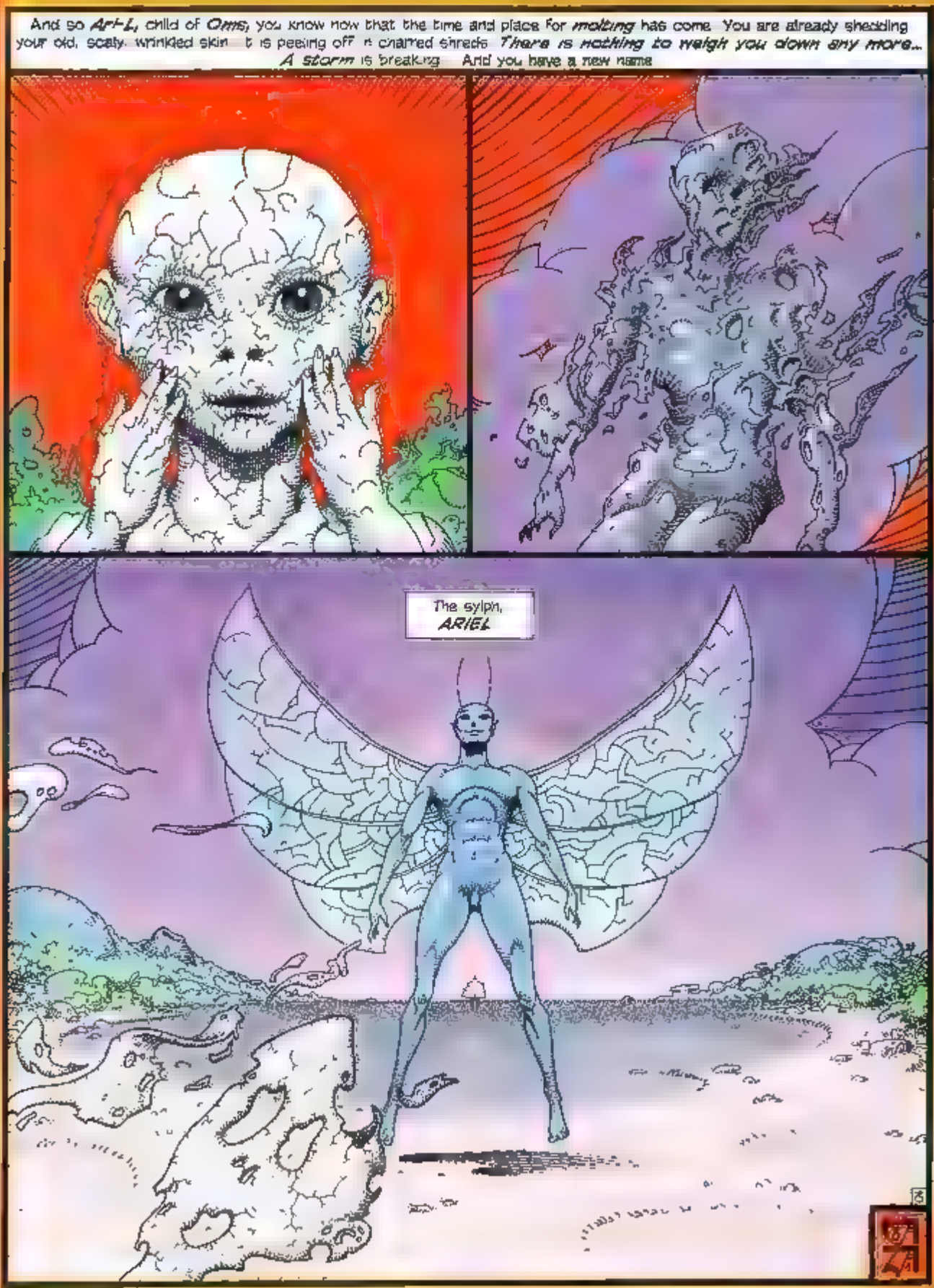


A monotonous voyage. His memories died one by one. The sea was stormless and still.




And that was when he reached the other shore
The other shore of Serenity
And there, for the first time, he saw
This, which is
A tree
And this, which is
A flower
And this, which is a living flesh-and-blood animal.
And everywhere this marvelous thing:
greenery
And... (but must we name everything?) dappled shadows, ready scents, common music, ginger
And an egg
and a stream


And... And... Also... animal spirits, dragons, prehistoric creatures...
...OTHERS!


And so *Ari-L*, child of *Oms*, you know now that the time and place for *molting* has come. You are already shedding your old, scaly, wrinkled skin. It is peeling off in charred shreds. *There is nothing to weigh you down any more...*
A storm is breaking. And you have a new name.
The sylph,
ARIEL

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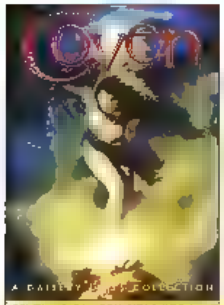

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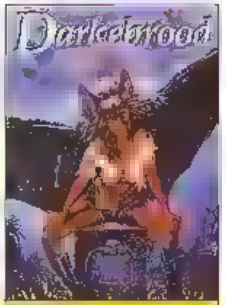

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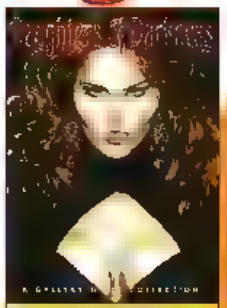

DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS 1
These women have sold their souls for power. Art by Ernie [illegible] others. Cover by [illegible]

DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS 2
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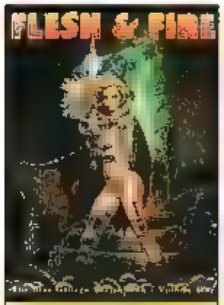

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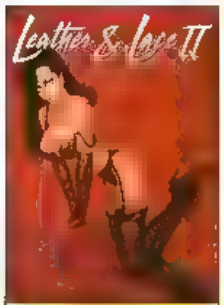

LEATHER & LACE 2
Good girls, bad girls, and bad girls being better. Art by Rocco, Arantes, Byrd, Loudon, & others. Cover by Joe Chiodo

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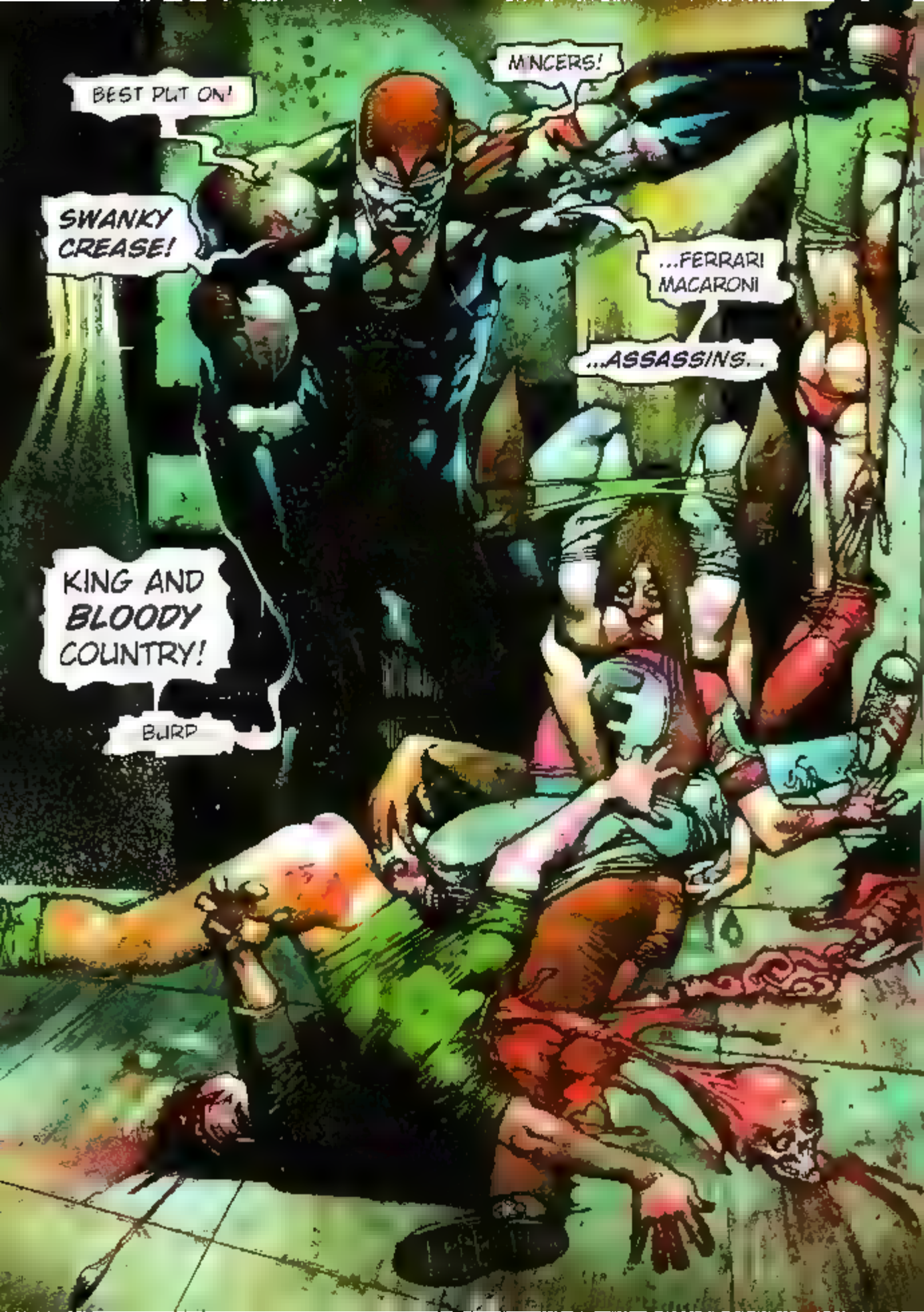
SIMON COLDWATER
CRAZY CREASE PUB
OY!
SMASH
YOU MIGHT AS WELL DIG A HOLE AND BURY YOUR OWN ASS COLDWATER, CUZ YOU'RE DEAD!
GUMMY SLAPPER!!

YOU'LL GET A BLOODY GOOD FISTING!!
LOTTA MINGE!
WAIT! I'M NOT --
MEH-- THE SASSY ASSASSINS WILL NEVER DIE! COME GIVE US A CUDDLE LUV!
FAT SLAG!
HUH?
LOTTA MINGE!

MEGAN OLKERS!
BOB'S YER UNCLE!
EASE DOWN MATE -- LETS BUY YA A DR--
--INK--
--GRUNT--
MORE FISTING!
FLICK
WHAT A LITTLE TEMPER... PRRRR...
COME ON WIDE BOY, LETS SEE WHAT YOU'RE REALLY PACK'N!

PARDON ME SIR, BUT I DON'T BELIEVE--
KA-PUNCH
AVA LEGOVA!
BANG ON THE MONEY!
--WE'RE WHO YOU THINK WE ARE! ACK.
MY EYES WON'T SEE YOU NO MORE! BOLLOCKS!
SIR REGINALD SHAG' OY--


BEST PUT ON!
MINCERS!
SWANKY CREASE!
...FERRARI MACARONI
..ASSASSINS..
KING AND BLOODY COUNTRY!
BURP

FISTING
FISTING
DRINK!
KING AND COUNTRY!
KING AND COUNTRY!
KING AND COUNTRY!
KING AND --
BAM
HUT!
HUT!
HUT!
HUT!
RIGHT THEN--
OY! QUEENS KNICKERS!!
YOU THERE-- STAND BACK LADDY!!

--COUNTRY!
UM . HOW'S YA FATHER?
SASSY ASSASSINS!!
GRRRR...

FUGGIN PLANKS!
I'LL FIST YOU--
--WITH ME BLOODY--
FLIPPEN HECK!
FEET!
KAH-RIPP!!!
I SAY -- THIS IS A BIT OF A STICKY W CKET!
TWAT
CHRIST!
Wobble!
Wobble!
BREEEE

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The new gorgeous sexy Bergman story.
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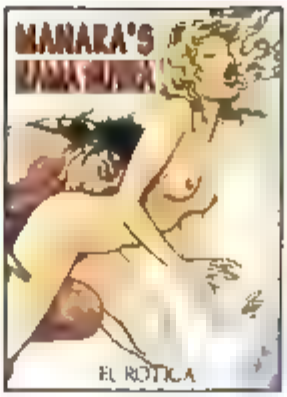

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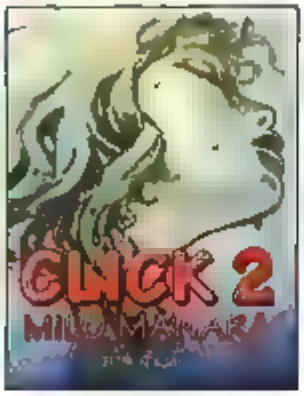

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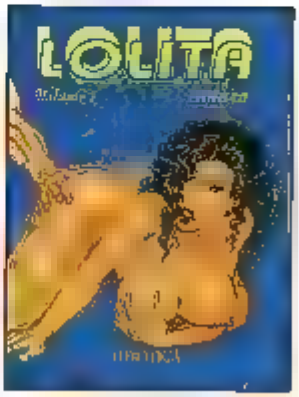

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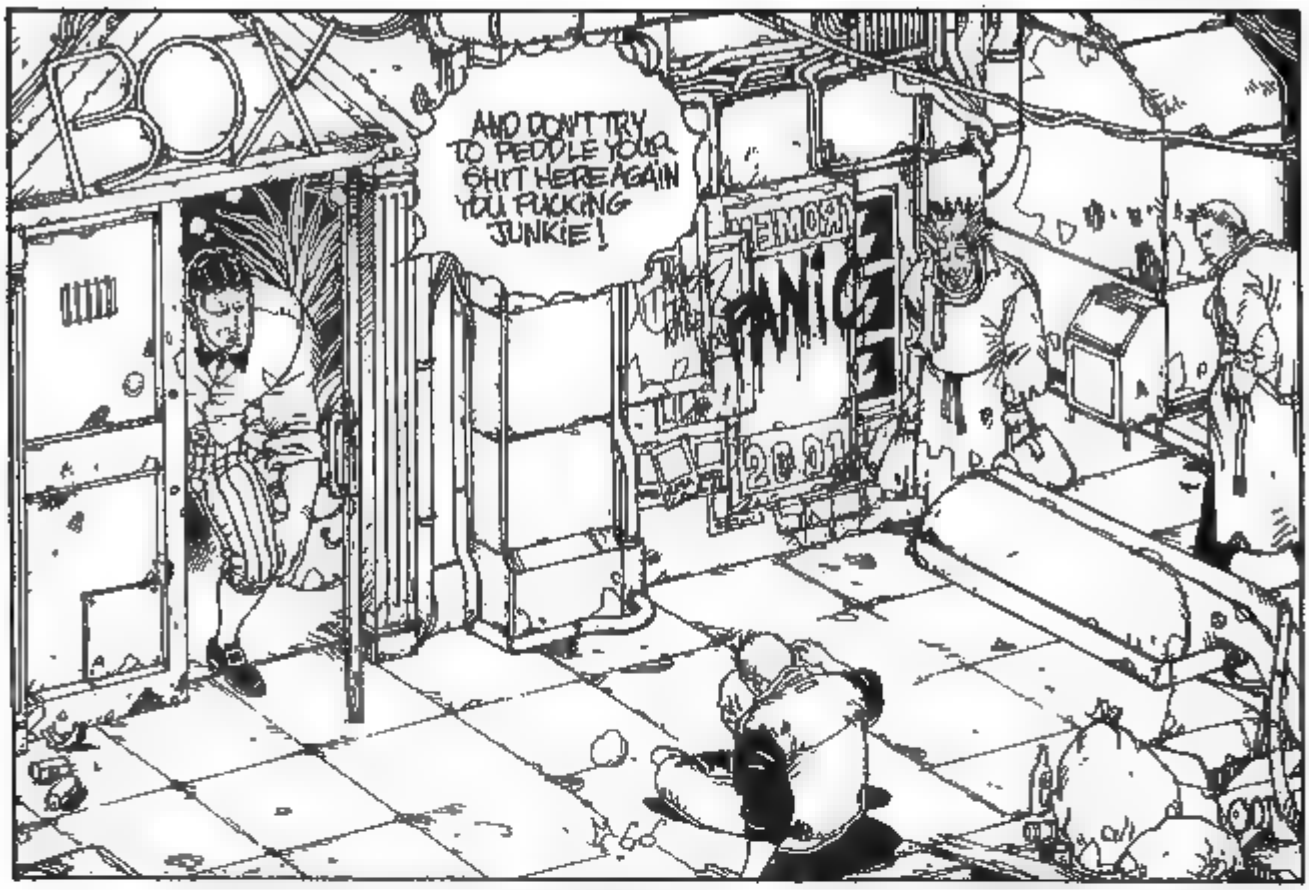
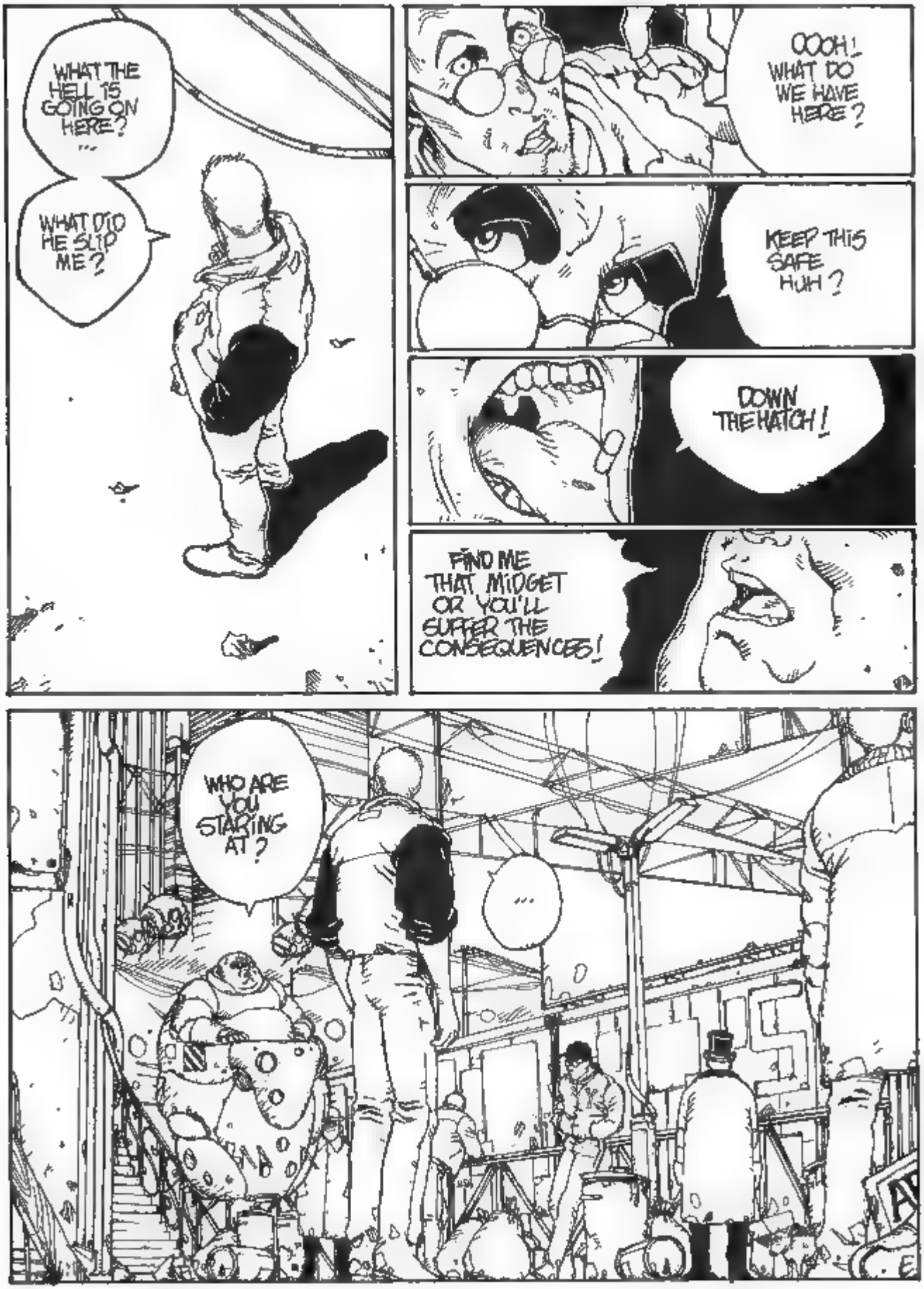


THE PILL

BY ELGHORRI

FREEZE! YOU LITTLE SHIT!
HUH?
HUH!
?
HEY! BACK OFF!
YOU MUST HELP ME! THEY CAN'T GET THIS!
KEEP THIS SAFE, I'LL FIND YOU AGAIN! THERE IS NO TIME TO EXPLAIN!
GET HIM!!
FAX
BOS
DON'T LET THAT LITTLE FREAK GET AWAY!
UZ
MOVE IT! TAKE HIM DOWN!

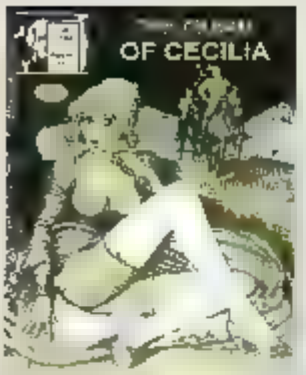

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?
...
WHAT DID HE SLIP ME?
OOOH! WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?
KEEP THIS SAFE HUH?
DOWN THE HATCH!
FIND ME THAT MIDGET OR YOU'LL SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!
WHO ARE YOU STARING AT?
...

GLPS!
NOTHING!
THEN GET OUT OF MY WAY!
COME ON BOYS! WE HAVE SOME BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF!
TAK!
PSHHH
I'M NOT GETTING BUZZED OFF THIS SHIT!
...
I'VE BEEN SCREWED! TYPICAL!
...
MAN I'M FUCKED! ALL THAT CRAP FOR A SHITTY PILL!

THAT SHITHEAD BOUNCER!
I'D LIKE TO BLOW HIS MOTHER FUCKING HEAD OFF!!
THANK YOU FOR COMING. HAVE A NICE EVENING!
THANKS!
HEY! WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?!
BLUB
HOLY SHIT!
BOY! I'M HAVING A REALLY BAD DAY!
GODDAMN MIDGET!... YOU ROTTEN LITTLE FUCKER!

HAH.
HAH!
HAH!
HAH!
FOR CHRIST'S SAKE! WHAT HAVE I DONE!
HHH
HHH!
MY GOD! WE'RE DOOMED!!
©ELGHORRI.97
SHIT! THIS PISS ASS WORLD SUCKS! ... WHY DOESN'T IT ALL END!
END

COMICS FROM LAST GASP



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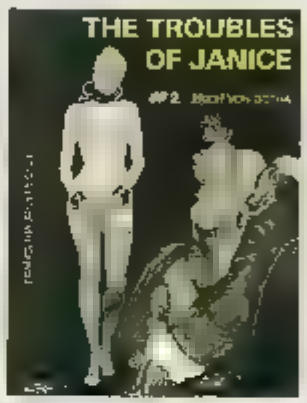

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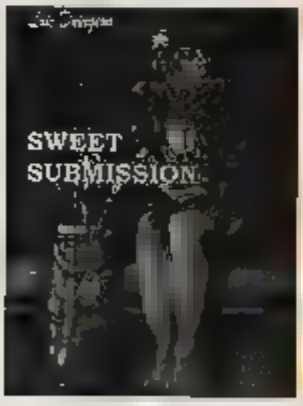

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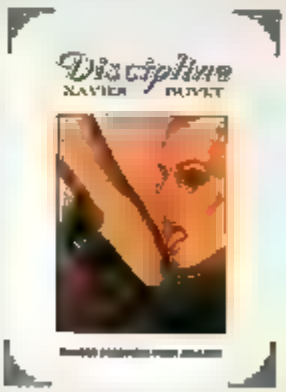

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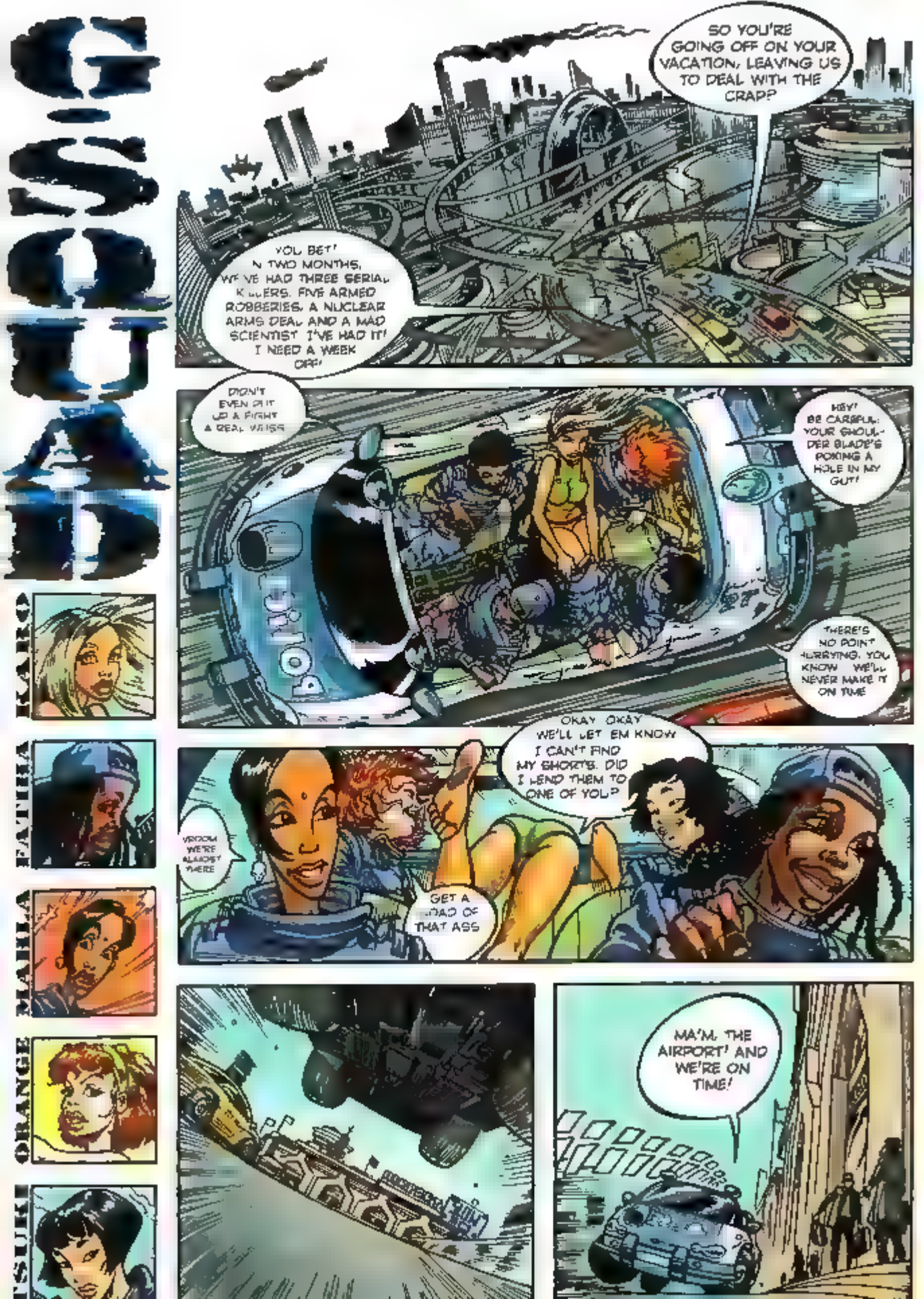
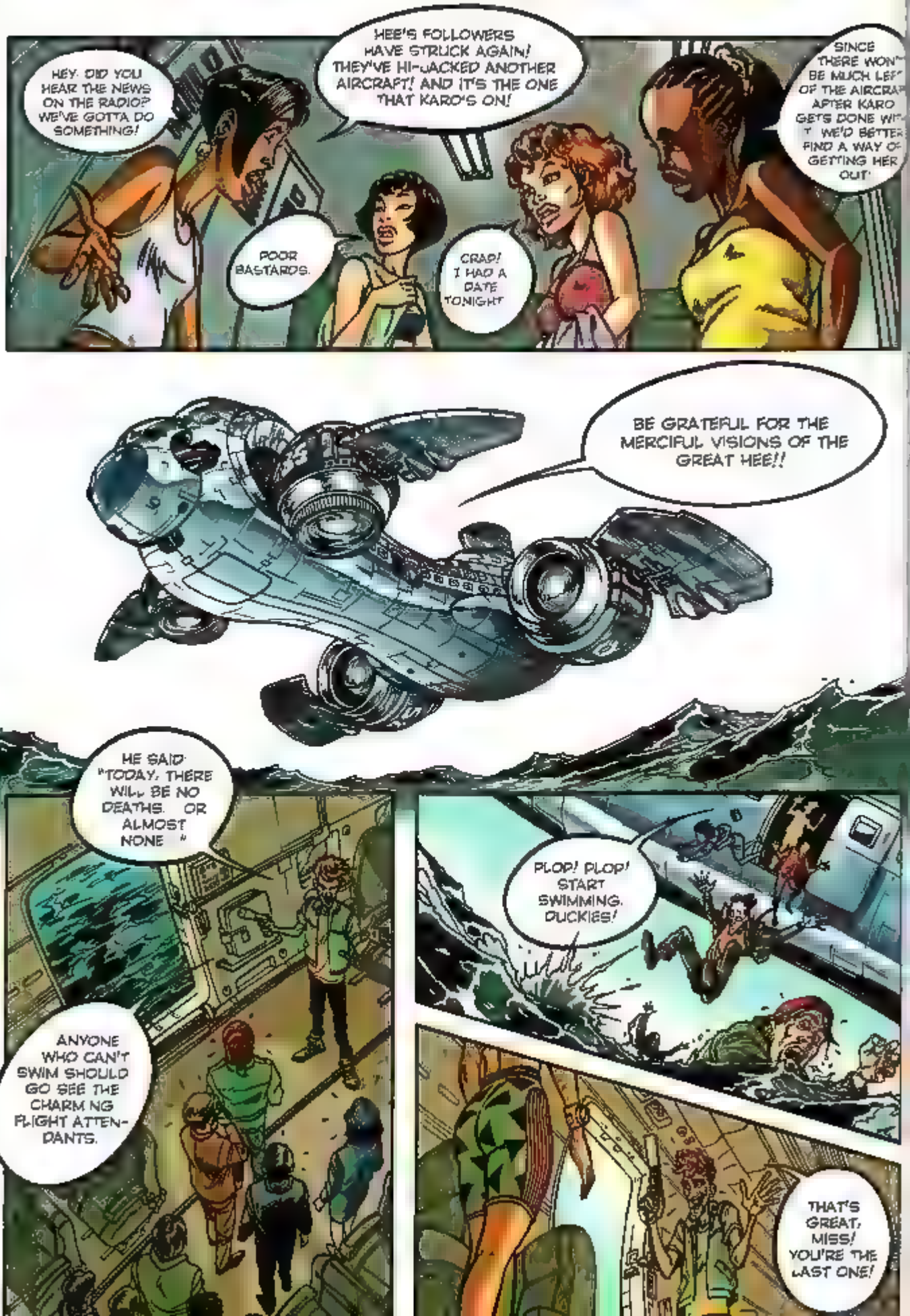

SO YOU'RE GOING OFF ON YOUR VACATION, LEAVING US TO DEAL WITH THE CRAP?
YOU BET! IN TWO MONTHS, WE'VE HAD THREE SERIAL KILLERS, FIVE ARMED ROBBERIES, A NUCLEAR ARMS DEAL AND A MAD SCIENTIST. I'VE HAD IT! I NEED A WEEK OFF!
DIDN'T EVEN GET UP A FIGHT A REAL MESS
HEY! BE CAREFUL: YOUR SHOULDER BLADE'S POKING A HOLE IN MY GUT!
THERE'S NO POINT HURRYING, YOU KNOW WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT ON TIME
VROOOM WE'RE ALMOST THERE
OKAY OKAY WE'LL LET EM KNOW I CAN'T FIND MY SHORTS. DID I LEND THEM TO ONE OF YOU?
GET A LOAD OF THAT ASS
MA'M, THE AIRPORT! AND WE'RE ON TIME!
KARO
FAITHA
MAHLA
ORANGE
TSUKI

YOU'VE GOT SO MANY METAL BITS IN YOUR BODY THE DETECTOR IS GONNA EXPLODE!
THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S MAKIN' THE ALARMS GO OFF AND THEY'LL FRISK YOU TILL THEY DO
IT'S GONNA TAKE 'EM AT LEAST TWO HOURS!
POLICE
YOU KNOW, IT'S HARD TO GET A TAN IN THE CLINK!
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS! AND DON'T FORGET TO DROP OFF MY UNIFORM AT THE CLEANER'S!
HURRY UP!! WE ALMOST TOOK OFF WITHOUT YOU!
FUCKING AIRPORT SECURITY
BREATHE DEEPLY, RELAX AND ENJOY THE VACATION!
I'M GONNA FORGET ABOUT BLOOD AND GUNPOWDER FOR A WHOLE WEEK.
WOOOOO

HELLO, EVERYBODY!! MY TWO BROTHERS HAVE ASKED ME TO GIVE YOU SOME PRETTY BAD NEWS! THE AIRCRAFT YOU'RE TRAVELING ON IS BEING REQUISITIONED IN THE NAME OF THE GREAT HEE, GURU OF THE HEAVENS, MASTER OF INFINITY! BLESSED BE HIS NAME!
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING! MORE CRAZIES... AND THEY'RE ALL DRUGGED OUT OF THEIR MINDS.. I MUST HAVE A LIFE-TIME SUBSCRIPTION TO NUT CASES!
AND WE DON'T WANT NO HEROES! I JUST PRESS THE BUTTON AND BOOM
BLAM BLAM
DON'T WORRY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! WE HAVEN'T JUST BROKEN THE SOUND BARRIER TWICE BUT THE PILOT AND THE COPILOT WERE MISBEHAVIN' SO I HAD TO COOL 'EM OFF


HEY. DID YOU HEAR THE NEWS ON THE RADIO? WE'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING!
HEE'S FOLLOWERS HAVE STRUCK AGAIN! THEY'VE HI-JACKED ANOTHER AIRCRAFT! AND IT'S THE ONE THAT KARO'S ON!
SINCE THERE WON'T BE MUCH LEFT OF THE AIRCRAFT AFTER KARO GETS DONE WITH IT WE'D BETTER FIND A WAY OF GETTING HER OUT.
POOR BASTARDS.
CRAP! I HAD A DATE TONIGHT
BE GRATEFUL FOR THE MERCIFUL VISIONS OF THE GREAT HEE!!
HE SAID "TODAY, THERE WILL BE NO DEATHS. OR ALMOST NONE."
ANYONE WHO CAN'T SWIM SHOULD GO SEE THE CHARMING FLIGHT ATTENDANTS.
PLOP! PLOP! START SWIMMING, DUCKIES!
THAT'S GREAT, MISS! YOU'RE THE LAST ONE!

YOU'RE ALREADY DRESSED FOR THE BEACH!
UNLESS YOU'D RATHER GO TOPLESS
WACK!
TOP THIS, ASSHOLE!
CRACK!
MACHOS LIKE YOU GIVE ME THE CREEPS!
CRUNCH!
SEE THIS? I COULD'VE SHOT YOU. BUT THE ONLY THING THAT EXCITES ME IS GOOD OLE TNT! AND WATCH OUT FOR POST MORTEM TWITCHES!
NOW IT'S YOUR TURN, CURLY!
OOO I'M REALLY SCARED!
NOW I'M GONNA BLOW YOU UP — AND ALL OF US TOO! MY SOUL IS READY BUT IS YOURS?

WAS THIS THE BIGGEST YOU COULD FIND?
NO, OF COURSE NOT STUPID BUT THIS ONE'S MY FAVORITE COLOR
COULDN'T YOU PICK ANOTHER MOMENT TO ARGUE?
HAVE YOU LOOKED AT YOURSELF IN A MIRROR RECENTLY FATSO?
YOU SHOULD GO ON A DIET, ORANGE! WE'RE TIPPING TO YOUR SIDE!
BLAM
PLAYTIME'S OVER! USE YOUR THUMB TO PLUG YOUR ASSHOLE SO WE DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO YOUR SHIT!
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
FUCKIN' BITCH! WASTIN' MY BUDDIES! YOU WERE BORN FOR ME TO KILL!
BLAM
BLAM

YEAH! BUT YOU GOTTA DO IT TO ME BEFORE I DO IT TO YOU!
BLAM
PTTT
SIGH
TIC! TIC! TIC!
TIC?
I'M NOT WAITING FOR NO TAC!
TAC

KARO WAS RIGHT! IT'S NICE TO GO ON VACATION ONCE IN A WHILE—LET'S HOPE THE RESCUE PARTY DOESN'T GET HERE TOO FAST!
YOU SAID IT, FATSO!
CUT IT OUT! I'M NO FATTER THAN THE REST OF YOU! OKAY, KIDS, IT'S TIME FOR OUR DAILY VISIT!
WELL THEN, WE'RE LOOKING BETTER TODAY, AREN'T WE?
SOON WE'LL BE ABLE TO DRAG YOU OUT INTO THE SUN!
BUT YOU CAN FORGET THE FULL-BODY TAN!

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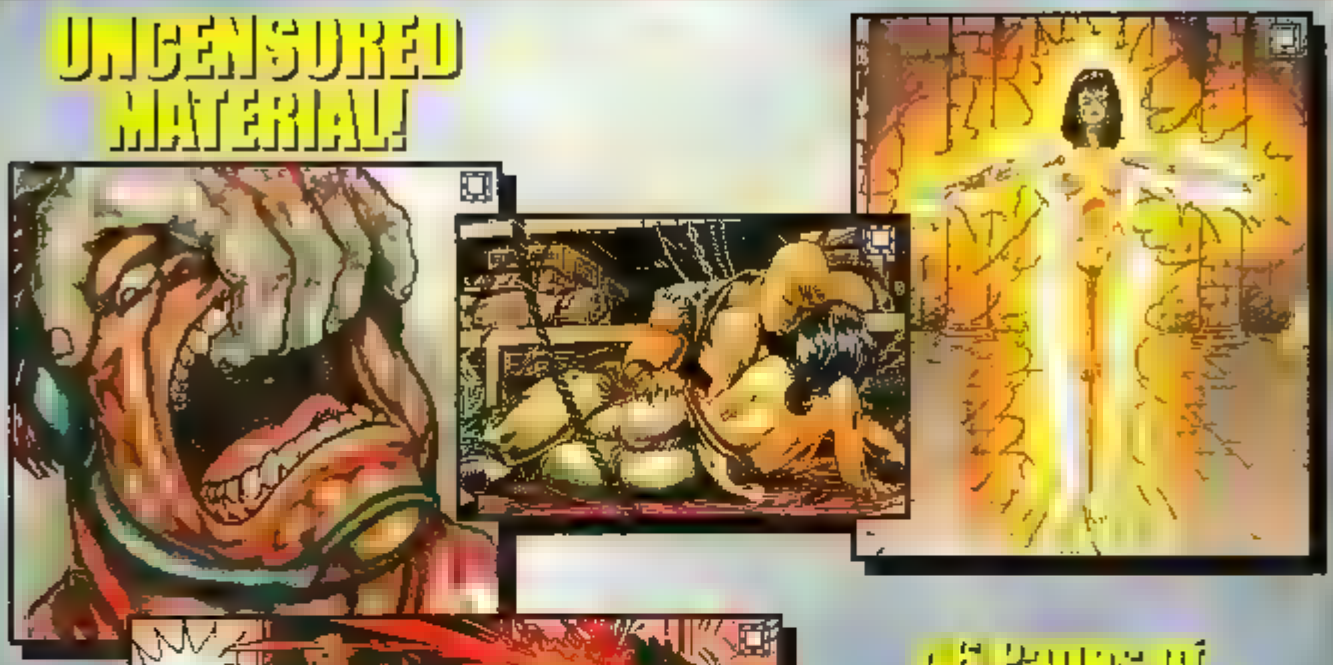

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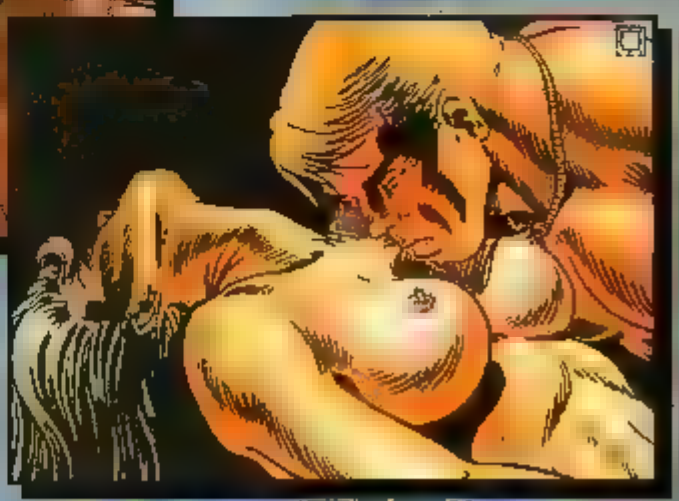

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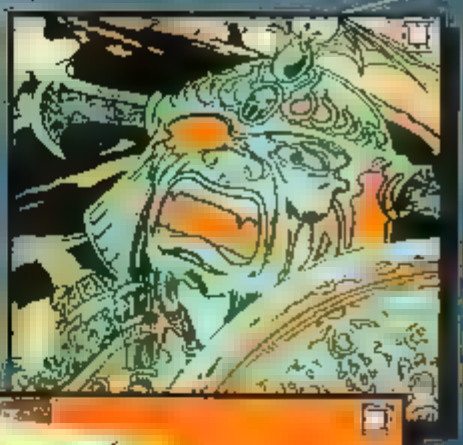

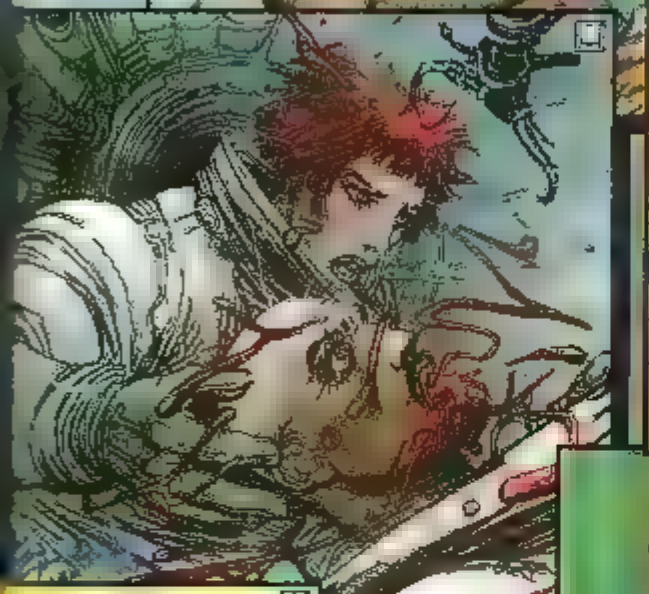

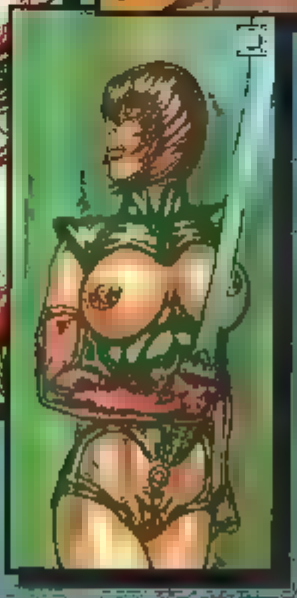

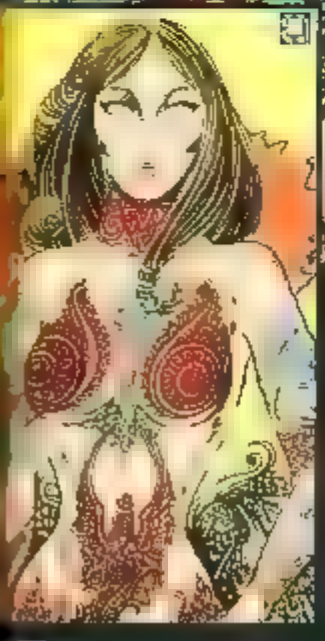

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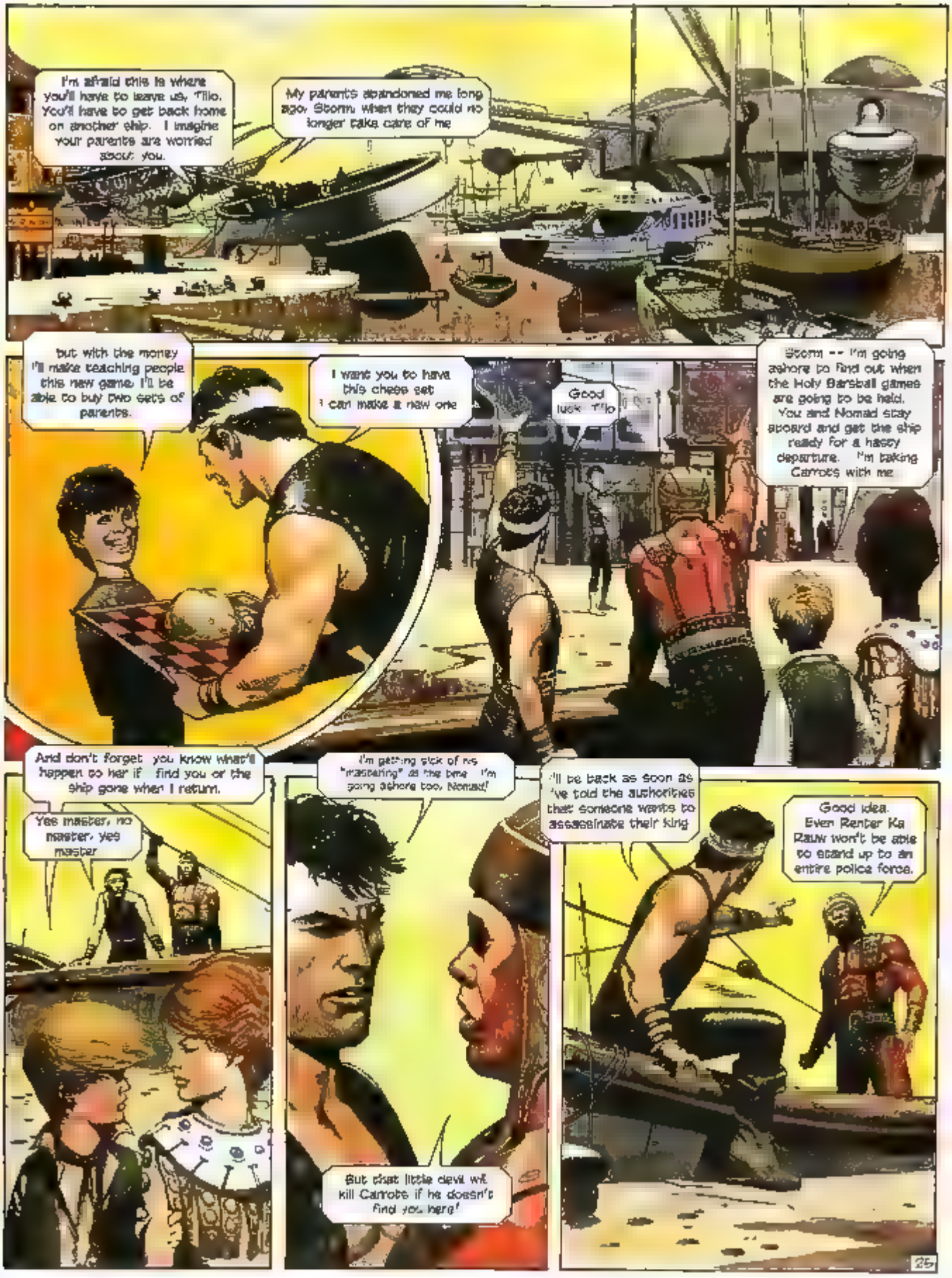
HEY . WANNA SEE A TAPE OF SOME OF MY BEST INTERVIEWS?
UH, YEAH >AHEM< SURE HOW FASCINATING!
LOOK YOU SEE? HERE I AM WITH JOHN JOHN KENNEDY, THE MOST COVETED BACHELOR IN NEW YORK
WOW, COOL SO, TELL ME DID HE MAKE A PASS AT YOU?
NATURALLY BUT HE HALF STUTTERS I HATE THAT
OF OF OF COURSE, I.. I UNDERSTAND
AND HERE I AM WITH KEVIN COSTNER, DOING AN INTERVIEW ON HIS PRIVATE BEACH
WHAT HAPPENED THERE?
WELL HE WANTED TO DO IT WITH ME, BUT I CUT T SHORT BECAUSE OF HIS TURNIP FACE
1

AH. HERE'S WHERE NTERVIEWED MICK JAGGER LOOK HOW OUR CLOTHES ARE TORN AS WE'RE LEAVING THE CONCERT ALMOST GOT LEFT N THE DUST
MICK JAGGER WOWWW AND HE'S A PRETTY FAMOUS WOMANIZER WHAT ABOUT HIM? YES? NO?
YECCH! HE'S MUCH TOO OLD AND DISGUSTING
WELL. ENOUGH OF THAT WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST WE DO NOW
UM. WELL UH.
UH. GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE GOT SOMETHING TO DO SEE? RETURN SOME VIDEOS YEAH. THAT'S T
SEE YA
MAN. MY FANTASY WOMAN, AND I JUST WALKED OUT ON HER
BUT IF IT DIDN'T HAPPEN FOR ANY OF THOSE GUYS
DAMN
ANOTHER ONE ESCAPES
I WISH KNEW WHY
MAYBE HE DIDN'T L KE THE INTERVIEWS
TRILLO MAICAS GARCIA SEIJAS (C) 93
2


I'm afraid this is where you'll have to leave us, Tilo. You'll have to get back home on another ship. I imagine your parents are worried about you.
My parents abandoned me long ago, Storm, when they could no longer take care of me
but with the money I'll make teaching people this new game, I'll be able to buy two sets of parents.
I want you to have this cheese cat. I can make a new one
Good luck, Tilo
Storm -- I'm going ashore to find out when the Holy Barkball games are going to be held. You and Nomad stay aboard and get the ship ready for a hasty departure. I'm taking Carrots with me.
And don't forget - you know what'll happen to her if I find you or the ship gone when I return.
Yes master, no master, yes master
I'm getting sick of his "mastering" all the time. I'm going ashore too, Nomad!
But that little devil will kill Carrots if he doesn't find you here!
I'll be back as soon as I've told the authorities that someone wants to assassinate their king
Good idea. Even Renter Ka Rauw won't be able to stand up to an entire police force.
25

That looks like the right kind of place... maybe it's the home of somebody important enough to act on my warning.
I'll keep to the side streets... that way, I'll run less risk of running into Rantar and Carrots.
Halt, stranger -- where do you think you're going?
...on a dire emergency -- I've come to warn your king of a plot to assassinate h...
TWAKK!
This guy must be crazy... or you believe he actually told us that he came to assassinate King Eslac?
26

WAIT -- this is a misunderstanding! Get me out of here, you idiots! Your king is going to be murdered!
Not anymore, buddy -- we've just taken care of that, haven't we? Let's go get a drink.
Don't waste your breath, murderer. Drinking time is only once a day around here -- and you just missed it! HAHAHAHAWHAWHAW!!
Evening falls over the Kingdom of Marrow. Pandarve, the giant living planet, moves in front of the white hole that is its sun. One by one, lights go on in the capital, Romilly, and fires are lit to combat the gathering dusk and accompanying cold. On board the ship, Nomad's apprehension grows.
By the dirty fingernails of Nockmankar! Where the devil is Storm -- why hasn't he returned? If he isn't here when Ranter gets back, there'll be some sparks flying. I've got to do something.
It's a good thing we didn't dawdle in the other port -- the Holy Baseball games are only two weeks away. Still, that's plenty of time to get acquainted with the layout of the arena and sign myself up as a contestant.
What's going on over there?
GET HIM!
KILL THE RED MAN!!
URGHH!
AAUGHH
UHHAH!
27

HOLD ON, NOMAD!! I'M COMING!!
GRRAAAAAHH!!
CRUNCH!!
TUWAK
GRAAAHH!!
GRRR!!
YiiEEEEE
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!
AAAUUWHG!
AAAGH!!
CRUNCH!!
THUNK!
STAY BACK, NOMAD. I'LL WIPE 'EM OFF THE DECK! THEY'VE NEVER FACED AN ERIBAN GRADUATE!!
CRUNCH!!
TWAAAK!
..et's see if an Eriban graduate's head is as hard as it is thick!
UURRGH!
TUWAKK!
AHHK!
28

What in the name of Pandarve do you think you're doing, Nomad? And where the hell is Storm?
Thinks fellas — think she rescued little bugger's ass or
I found a few friends to help me take down our invincible young master. At least, they helped to keep his attention occupied while I did what I've been wanting to do since laid eyes on the little monster
I didn't know you had any friends on this planet..
Well, you know how it is -- I'll admit, it might've had something to do with the exchange of money! HAHAHA!
C'mon, lads. Let's go an' get a drink. This fighting is thirsty business
At least he's still alive. didn't know you could be so sneaky, Nomad. . So tell me: how are you planning to prevent him from killing you when he wakes up?
dunno. thought I'd cruise 'im up like a sausage.
Well think again, Nomad. You don't think the Academy of Assassination in Erban would have taught him to be something of an escape artist as well?? Iron chains probably wouldn't be able to hold him. Help me carry him
He can probably sweat acid from his pores to burn away the ropes, or something equally nasty. But he told us himself that he couldn't open his survival capsule from the inside!
And when it closes, he goes into suspended animation -- Good thinking, Carrots!
24

So. Jr. what
Ranter was scouting for information the whole time. We found out that the Holy Barbell game is held a week from today
Ranter was going to take part. Of course, the cocky little bastard was sure he'd win easily. The only time he could get close enough to the King to assassinate him would be when he was being crowned victor of this year's game.
I couldn't care less about the King of this or any place -- And I don't like being used in these dirty little games. Dammit, this place is making me antsy. What the hell is keeping Storm so long?
Wow. We sort of mucked up the kid's graduation assignment, didn't we? I almost feel sorry for him.
I have no idea... and I'm getting worried. He was going to warn the King about the assassination attempt. Maybe I'd better follow his tracks and find out what trouble he's gotten himself into this time. You hold the fort for me in the meantime, Carrots. I promise, I'll find Storm if it kills me!
Later
Don't you think you should have let him finish his story before you bashed his brains in??
What, you think I don't know an assassin when I see one??
NOMAD -- WAKE UP!!! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM, YOU BASTARDS?
30

Storm... hey, buddy! I guess I'm not the only stupid idiot around here.
Thank god, you're not dead, Nomad! Together, we may have a chance to get out of this hell hole!
Don't COUGH... don't count on it, stranger! COUGH.
There's only one way out of here. COUGH. Straight to the Baseball arena.
When morning comes to the kingdom of Marrow, it finds Carrots still waiting anxiously for Nomad and Storm...
By all the million gods of Pandarve... Where are those boys... what are they doing? Something must have happened to them or they'd be back by now.
HELLO CARROTS!
?!
Oh, Tilo... It's you. How have you been doing in this city?
Great, Carrots! The game of chess is going to be a huge success in Marrow. I've found a financial backer to manufacture chess sets, and I am teaching around the clock. It doesn't matter how young or old you are when there's money involved.
The Marrowians find chess a fascinating game, you see. It reminds them of the strategy and tactics of the Baseball games. But everybody can play and you don't have to be killed if you lose! I may become a rich man here. Carrots. Will you marry me?
Don't make jokes, Tilo. The situation is serious. Storm and Nomad have disappeared in the city... I've got to go out and find them. Will you help me by watching the ship while I'm away?
OF course, Carrots. Don't worry.
See that no strangers come aboard... I'll be back as soon as... can!
He'll be safe from Renter Ka Rauw. The sarcophagus can't be opened from the inside.
21

Where could they have gone? They must have asked around first. I know. maybe should try the bars first beginning with the scariest one and working my way up. If I know Nomad, that's a safe bet.
I've just come off duty, ya know. Been a hell of a night.. Caught two conspirators trying to assassinate good King Eslas. They put up quite a fight, but they met their match in me. HAHAHA. One of 'em was this giant RED dude, ya know. Had to subdue him.
A large man, the color of your hair? Have you been drinking, lady? And if not, why not?
Now they're in the palace dungeons. meat for the Holy Barbaal games. They'll probably be forced to fight in one of the side events. HAHAHA!!
HAHAHA Nobody ever wins in those!
must find weapons on the ship. .. Or at least money or valuables to bribe the guards
BY THE DROPPINGS OF PANDARVE!! He's talking about Storm and Nomad - - they're in JAIL! What am going to do now?
I'm so sorry, Carrots. I couldn't resist. I had to peek inside the sarcophagus. guess probably shouldn't have done that, huh?
32

Romilly, the capital of the kingdom of Marrow has been overcome by Bareball fever for weeks.

But finally, the day of the Holy game arrives... The game that will decide who gets the chance to inherit the throne should the King die in the coming year
Come on, hurry up, will ya? We'll be late for the games!

Tch. what did I tell you? All the best seats are taken anyway.
Hey! Don't push back there!
The contestants display themselves for the gathering crowd. There is a young boy, straight from the farm.
a veteran who served in several wars, preserving his strength for what may be his last fight.
a condemned criminal, desperately taking his only chance to escape a death sentence.
a young, penniless widow, competing with the sad knowledge that if she dies, at least her children will be brought up by the state.
Yeah? Well, if you bastards are so brave, why don't you come and fight me in the games?
You should have stayed with your sheep, farmer. HAHAHAHA!
If you're as good at Bareball as at breaking and entering, you won't last very long today HAHAHAHA.
The gallows would have been quicker, jailbird. HAHAHA!
HAHAHAHA. How about this chick - - have you read her card? She thinks they'll let her win out of compassion HAHAHA!
33

WHEEEH HAHAHA!! Will ya look at that – – crazy bitch thinks her beauty's gonna keep her alive! HEEHAHA!!
I have a promise for you little man with the big mouth.
I promise you that if I win the game this year, you will fight me in the next Barsball!
Now laugh!
AAGK BUT BUT
NOO NOOOO
What are you doing?
Just passing the time.
It's a newly invented game just came on the market. It's supposed to be a symbolic representation of a Barsball game. They call it chess, and you can play it anywhere, anytime you choose.
Interesting.
GENTLEMEN! Keep the line moving, please.
Meanwhile, not far away
We're going to have to make our move NOW, Nomad this is the day of their Holy Game and attentions are occupied. SHH. I hear the guard coming!
Well hope your stay has taught you some humility HAHAHA!! It won't be long now before they come to get you and teach you how to play barsball. HAHAHAHA!
34

Hey there, I'm talking to you assassin of kings. Answer me or won't bring your meal. If there is going to be one before they cart you off to the Baseball arena. HAHAHAHA!!
GHLOBBB.
Here's your answer, blubberman! NOMAD! NOW!
AAAARGHHH!!
The keys, Storm - quick before he drops to the ground. We'll never be able to reach them if he does!
CHOKE!!!
You can let him go now, Nomad. He's unconscious, and I've got the keys!
Quicky Storm - open my cage before Artoria 6.0 comes along to see what these choking noises were about
35

Hey, good friends. Comrades. Don't leave us here to rot. Open our cages too!
What'll we do, Nomad? We can't spare the time -- We don't even know what they're doing in jail... They may be just a bunch of political prisoners but we could also be freeing murderers
Do it, Storm -- a full scale escape will create some confusion for us
All right... You can free yourself...
May Pandarve smile upon you, friend.
Holy! Good thing we never had a chance to visit this room, Nomad
This is where all that screaming came from that we heard from time to time.
This must be the palace
Shit... There are three soldiers coming...
36

I think this'll be enough, Nomad!
THUD
Are you sure we shouldn't warn the king of the attempted murder Ranter is planning, Storm?
All this time has passed and we haven't heard from Carrope! Something must have gone wrong on the ship. We'll need help to save her from the clutches of that little monster. If it isn't too late already
Uhh
Speak up, fatso: Where do we find the king of this damned place?!
AKKK In the royal box at the bare. ball. arena.
This way we won't look suspicious if we run into anybody along the way
And our newfound friend here will show us the shortest way to the arena.
Yes, sir
But keep in mind, pal. this new friendship won't keep me from putting this sword beneath your ribs if you try to attract the attention of any palace servants. Understood?
Thanks to the fact that one guard knows the quiet places in the palace, the small group reaches the passage that leads to the arena and royal box unnoticed. On both sides stand the statues of illustrious Barsball victors from the past.
BARSBALL!
The staircase at the end of this passage leads to the royal terrace.

In the barsball arena, the playing fields sink into whirling lava, each with a different speed. The contestants are fighting for their lives. If the last pillar rises above the surface, there will be only one survivor left -- just one single victor of the Holy Barsball game
BARSBALL!!
Hahh?! Who dares to enter the royal box without permission?!
STORM!
Tilo has received the King's invitation for a demonstration of the chess game, after the barsball competition.
RENTER KA RAUW!
AAGHKK!
Not another sound, or you'll be in need of an heir to the throne
But he didn't feel... eh... so good, so I came in his place!
What are you doing here?
38

Please, your Highness... my lady... calm yourself! All will turn out for the best.
Let the King go, Nomad. I had intended to wait for the Barsball game to finish... but I will perform my graduation assassin NOW!!
Warm me if you want to, shallow, your majesty. I'll move my sword to give you room.
Give it up, Ranter. This is one time when all of your speed, your guile and your tricks won't help you.
This time we hold the cards, Ranter. If we let you murder the King, these people will tear us apart sure, you might have a plan to escape their wrath, but we might as well die making sure you won't be able to do what you came for by killing the King ourselves... too bad, Ranter, you should have learned to play chess!!
You're a fool, Storm. Take a close look at the Barsball players behind me in the arena... or those who are left, anyway.
BARSAMAN
BARSAMAN
CARROTS!
I have ordered her, under the influence of a narcotic drug, to enter the Holy Barsball game!
39

Look -- those are real Baseball tactics. Much more sophisticated than that insipid child's game you call "chess"! That contestant is going to eliminate Carrots! Until now, she was no danger on his way to the top
BARSAMAN
BARSAMAN
GIVE ME THAT!
Not a bad idea, Storm! Like I said before, you would have made a good pupil in Eriban -- a first class professional killer
HOLD ON, CARROTS! I'M COMING!
BARSAMAN
BARSAMAN
OOOOHHH!
NO!
40

HOLD TIGHT, CARROTS!
She's fainted!
The heat of red hot lava scorches Storm's feet through the shields and boots. At the same time, the leather ropes begin to smolder
The shields, under their double load, sink into the syrupy, molten mass.
Hmm.. What a dilemma, eh? You'll have to let go of the King if you want to help your friend, my dear Nomad.
Help me, Nomad! The shields are giving way!
Stay where you are,' had a similar plan as the red man. but for a far different reason.
41

Storm -- witness the execution of my graduation assignment! The death of the King of Marrow! From this moment on I am a graduated professional slayer from Erbam!
Do something! He'll murder your King! That's why he came here!
WAIT, RENTER KA RAUM!
came to this court disguised as a travelling councilor. My real goal is to give you the final information you need for the realization of your mission!
MY TEACHER! My teacher from Erbam! What.. how?
What in Pandarva's name is happening in the royal box?
And when will the Baseball victor be crowned?
The King of Marrow is your father!!
You were raised at the Academy of Erbam from your earliest years on. Maybe sometimes you wondered who your parents are. I'm going to reveal that to you now -- YOU'RE STANDING IN FRONT OF THEM!
Now you graduate, Renter Ka Raum!
But - our son had been taken from us when he was still a baby. We never saw him again!
You? My son?
42

It is true! I feel it in my heart. MY CHILD IS BACK!
NO! NO! It can't be true! I have no parents!
What do you think, Storm? Shall we put him down?
No, Nomad. I don't think that will be necessary.
I AM RENTER KA RAJW! am a graduate of the Academy in Eribarl I AM A PROFESSIONAL ASSASSIN! I.
I cannot do it
You've failed your exam, Renter Ka Rajw. But don't be ashamed. Many students from Eribarl fail in the most difficult test they all have to endure -- to kill their own father!
GO AWAY! GO AWAY. ALL OF YOU! LEAVE ME ALONE!
Ma. Majesty the prisoners have brokan... loose.' They're overwhelming the palace..
43

My son. Pandarve has given you back to me
Nomad, this is our chance to get away. Nobody's paying attention to us
ARGH!
Citizens of Marrow! Followers of Bareball! Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Holy Bareball game is, um. interrupted indefinitely!
We'd better take off these uniforms, Storm. or else the prisoners will kill us.
Come on Carrots!
Uhh. what's happening? The last thing I can remember is Ranter tried to strangle me ..
Oh, my child. You were kidnapped out of your cradle, but you've returned into your mother's arms
NO! GO AWAY! I DON'T HAVE A MOTHER!
TEACHER! DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE!!
Guards! Protect your King!
I'm sorry, Ranter Ka Rauw. but a student who fails his graduation test no longer exists in the eyes of his teacher

almost feel guilty for setting the prisoners free
Nonsense, Nomad! A small revolution now and then can be very beneficial in a place where the prisons are so overcrowded
Let's try to avoid anymore fights.
The chaotic surprise attack on the royal palace has not yet penetrated the city
Renter must've had an escape route, so the ship should still be in the place at the quay....
water, some miles outside the harbor of Romily
STORM! NOMAD! Come and look. We have a stowaway!
RENTER KA RAUW!!
Hello, Storm. I wonder if you would do a failed student from Eriban a favor...? after everything that's happened, I mean.
45

What happened to Tilio?
He can manage for himself... I gave him enough money to lie low until after the Barsball games.
With any luck, the Barsball will soon be forgotten and the game of chess will have conquered Marrow...
Are you sure this is what you want, Ranter?
I've been raised as a professional assassin from Eribar. Storm... another sort of life is unthinkable for me.
Close the sarcophagus...
In my regeneration capsule, I'll float through space unharmed, maybe even dreaming... for all eternity... till the end of time.
He can't open the coffin from the inside.
For Ranter, in his artificial sleep, eternity will last only a moment.
Back home on Earth, millions of years ago, it was customary to say on these occasions: one, two, three... In God's name...
... yeah, but the dead bodies of sailors weren't supposed to come back to life, I imagine.
Farewell, Ranter Ka Rauw...
Set a course for Pandarve, Nomad. I'd like to feel firm ground under my feet again.
AND SO ENDS ANOTHER ADVENTURE OF... STORM!
Don Lawrence
48

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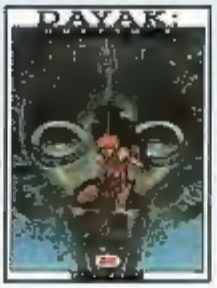

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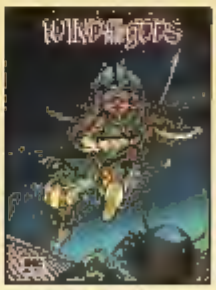

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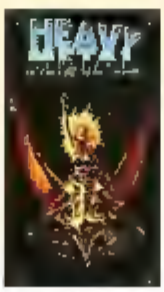

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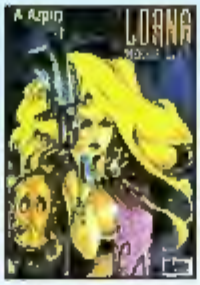

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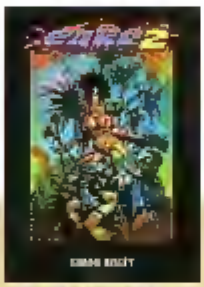

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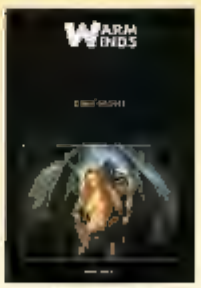

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